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AT REST.

BY SHIRLEY WYNNE.

Softly, softly down from heaven drops the dewy twilight veil;
Out into the purple ether swims the young moon cold and pale,
Smiling o'er the little churchyard on the hill-side's grassy breast,
Where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

Tenderly the shadows gather in the glory overhead,
While the storied wind is singing "Requiescant" for the dead.
Here is peace for heart that acheth, calm for ev'ry throbbing breast,
Where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest!

From Out the Storm.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DICK'S SWEETHEART," ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE last sad formalities had come to an end; the body of Lady Mary Craven was consigned to the family vault. Once again all the windows at the Towers were flung wide open, and the merry, dancing summer sunshine streamed into and lighted up the rooms that never again would know the gentle presence that had graced them for so many years.

Marvel went about all day, wandering dreamily from place to place, visiting the favorite haunts, and living over again the happy, tranquil hours she had spent with her first and best friend. Once or twice she walked sadly down to the Rectory, and sat there had in hand with the rector, who truly mourned with her for one whose loss seemed to him irreparable.

Fulke—who should have been a companion to her now that the first severe strain was removed—was so filled with a nervous longing for the moment that should permit him again to seek the presence of Mrs. Scarlett and hear his fate from her lips that he was practically useless.

He grew silent—almost irritable. It angered him that he could not endure the suspense with greater calmness, for he told himself—and indeed he was absolutely certain—that he had but to wait for the day named by her to learn that his beloved was really his.

But it was hard to wait; the hours hung heavily upon his hands and the days were intolerably long. When, however, the morning dawned that permitted him to seek her, a great peace—a sense of perfect rest—fell upon him.

Marvel and he breakfasted together; and he told her that he should be obliged to leave her and go up to town for the day.

"In all probability I shall not return until to-morrow," he said, for visions of spending the evening with Leonie floated before him as he spoke—an evening with her as her affianced husband—as the one she held dearest on earth. "But you must not be lonely; you must not let one of your sad little fits of depression take possession of you in my absence. It is for the day only, remember; and the hours will be short."

Too short, he thought.

"Oh, so long!" she corrected.

He had induced her to take the head of the table, and now she was pouring out his coffee in a nervous childish fashion; but as she spoke she looked up at him sorrowfully.

"Why are you going?" she asked.

"Business," he replied promptly.

"I wish I could go with you. I suppose"—with an air of doleful doubt—"I could not?"

"My dear girl, no. And you wouldn't like it if you could."

"Oh, if I should be in the way——"

"It isn't that. But just fancy how dull you would find it, all by yourself in a hotel! I should be too much occupied to take you about and amuse you."

"I shouldn't mind that. And I am sure I shouldn't be dull in a hotel—I shouldn't indeed, because I have been in one; and I could walk about it all day, and examine it, and peep into the rooms, and enjoy myself very well—that is, as well as I could without you."

"You couldn't do anything of the kind," said Wriothesley, divided between a desire to laugh and an inclination to enlarge her mind on the subject. "Young ladies can't walk about hotels or peep into rooms that belong to other people without being considered at least peculiar. You don't want to be considered peculiar, do you?"

"Oh, I don't know!" said Marvel, who was plainly too disappointed to be argued with effectually. "I suppose I could stay in my own room, at all events," she said presently, as though indignantly defying the hotel people to turn her out of that; "and afterwards, when your business was over, you would come back, and——"

"My business will take up all my time; and—in fact, I can't take you," he said, with some show of impatience.

She put down the toast she had been eating, and two large tears rolled down her cheeks.

"What's the matter now?" he demanded, in despair.

"It isn't true," she sobbed angrily, from behind her black-bordered handkerchief. "You said you would be the same to me as auntie was; and—and there isn't a word of truth in it. She wouldn't have left me behind—she would have taken me with her wherever she went."

"Can't you understand, Marvel, that there may be reasons why I cannot?" he said.

To talk to her about the propriety or *les convenances* seemed to him a hopeless task, and one that might be prolonged for an eternity. No child bred within the four walls of a convent was ever so unsophisticated as she.

As he sat there, feeling how impossible it was to put the case clearly before her, he was not altogether sure that Lady Mary's training had been a judicious one. At all events, it was a very troublesome training for those who came after. And yet, if troublesome, how sweet! Through all he acknowledged that.

"Do try to understand that," he said.

"Well, I will"—tearfully and with an effort. "Will you be back soon?"

"Yes, soon—I hope."

"But at once, I mean"—eagerly and with a beseeching look at him from behind the urn—"by the very first train in the morning?"

"Well, no, not by the first train—that goes at about three a. m. And perhaps—I think it better to tell you, Marvel, because disappointment would be worse to you—I think there is a possibility that I may not be able to return until the day after to-morrow."

He spoke quite steadily, telling what he believed to be the truth, more for her sake than his own, and rather against his will, as he feared another outburst of grief when she should hear it. He was mistaken, however, for she made no sign of being sunk in deeper depths of woe, save a heavy sigh of resignation. Her crestfallen air incensed him. Good heavens, what was it she expected?

"My dear child," he said, raising his brows, "you didn't suppose I was going to spend the rest of my natural life here, did you, walking up and down the garden paths?"

"No. But how I wish you would!"

She said it with such heartfelt longing that, after a struggle with his better self, he burst out laughing. He laughed long and heartily, in spite of his desire to suppress himself, whilst Marvel sat staring at him. He could see that she was distinctly offended, though she sought hard to conceal and quite believed that she had effectually done so when she had asked him, in what she fondly but erroneously supposed to be her natural tone, to have some more coffee. It was pathos upon pathos!

He repressed himself then, and said, "No thank you," with such a contrite air that she relented, and finally made up with him by coming from behind the ponderous urn and slipping in a chair close to his elbow. Thus placed, she made an excellent breakfast, and was rather more cheerful than he had seen her since Lady Mary's death.

She walked down to the gate with him presently, past the flowering rhododendrons, and through the sweet avenue of limes, the dog-cart having been sent on ahead at her particular request. During that hateful minute when he had laughed at her she had made up her mind not to be dismal again—at least before him—and she chattered incessantly all down the drive, throwing in even a laugh here and there to show him how she was; until the tall iron gates came in view.

She felt that she could not go beyond them, and stopped abruptly when they reached the end of the avenue. All at once her courage forsook her, and finally she took leave of him as if he were going to New Zealand.

"It will be a terrible time," she said; "but I will try not to mind it much."

"And, if I should not return the day after to-morrow," he ventured, rather nervously, feeling that he was growing quite afraid of her—"there is a bare possibility—that is, perhaps I may be detained."

He paused, wondering how she would take this, and was at last quite surprised by her manner—it was so different from what he had expected.

"You won't," she said confidently. "You said 'perhaps' to it, and that always means a doubt; and I know things could not happen so unkindly as to keep you away longer than the day after to-morrow?"

"What shall I bring you from town?" he asked, laughing. "A doll?"

"Nonsense! Don't you see that I'm grown up? Now go—go quickly!"—giving him a little push. "The sooner you go, the sooner you will come back to me."

The horse standing outside the open gates, she could see, was growing restive. Wriothesley jumped into the dog-cart and gathered up the reins, while Marvel turned away disconsolately and went slowly towards the house.

The next minute Wriothesley glanced at her, and saw she had come to a stand-still, and that her eyes were full of tears. He waved an adieu to her, which she returned, and then she walked quickly away.

"Poor little lonely girl!" he thought, and through his heart there rushed a pang of sincerest pity for her.

During his drive to the station, his mind was more or less occupied by her; and he came to the conclusion that it was a distinctly troublesome, if very sweet legacy, that Lady Mary had left him. What a dear little thing she was, but how impractical! What on earth was he to do with her? His marriage with Leonie would not in all probability come off for some time, and meanwhile where was Marvel to be placed.

She was too old for school, unfortunately, but not old enough to live on with him at the Towers without unkind comment from the world. He might, of course, give up the Towers to her; but that would attract attention too; and already Leonie's mind was strangely exercised about the girl.

A bright thought occurred to him—he would consult Leonie on the matter; and perhaps—she was so charming—she would arrange for Marvel to stay with her until, by their marriage, they could make a settled home for her. He dwelt upon this all the way to town, and lost sight of it only as he drew near Mrs. Scarlett's house in Park Lane.

Then a sense of nervous happiness took possession of him, blotting out all lesser thoughts. It seemed to him that he could see the woman he loved awaiting him with softened eyes and hands outstretched, and a little tremulous murmur of sweet and loving words upon her lips. Her face rose before him, appearing in his eyes more lovely than ever, and therefore the more to be prized.

"Waught under heaven so strongly doth allure
The sence of man, and all his minde possesse,
As beautie's lovely baite."

His mind was fixed upon her, and a very rapture of joy filled him as he told himself that never yet was man more certain of having his love returned than was unworthy he.

CHAPTER IX.

Mrs. Scarlett was alone; she was very simply but very exquisitely and expensively dressed, and she was as calm and smilingly self-composed as though love's tumults were unknown to her. She rose as Wriothesley entered, and greeted him with precisely the proper amount of gravity due to a young man who had recently lost his mother—for Lady Mary, she knew, had been quite that to him.

"I was wondering when you would come," she said.

He looked at her quickly. When he would come! How strange her tone was! Had she forgotten?

"Did you get my note?" she went on. "No? Oh, I am so sorry about that! You must have thought me so cold, so unfeeling; but nowadays don't you think the postal arrangements are very defective? I wish you had had that note; but even without it, dear Wriothesley, you know you had my sincerest sympathy all through."

"Did you think I ought to have come?" he asked, clinging in a dull way to her first sentence.

Perhaps he had offended her by obeying her too closely and keeping away until the day named. He hoped so with a passion of which he himself was hardly aware. He had heard nothing more that she had said—only those first words.

"Oh, no; in the circumstances I could not have expected or desired that you should call! I hope I am too much your friend not to know when to efface myself."

She smiled her usual brilliant, fleeting smile as she continued:

"Indeed I did not dare to think I should have the pleasure of seeing you again for quite a long time to come. But you have been very good to me. Do you know"—leaning towards him—"the very last thing I expected was to see you to-day."

What did it all mean? Why did she talk to him like that? His friend! How strange it all was! He felt dazed, confused, and a surging sound came into his ears and tormented him. The very last thing she had expected! Then the singing sound died away, and he found himself quite calm and cold. She was still talking, her soft *traînante* voice as subtly sweet as ever.

"Though personally unknown to me, I feel from all I have heard that Lady Mary Craven was a friend not to be replaced."

This tribute was very gracefully uttered; but Wriothesley could find no words to reply to it. He wished vaguely that she would not speak about that good dead woman, yet he did not know at the mo-

ment why he wished it—he was so mystified by this curious unaccountable change in her.

"You are right," he said gravely; "Lady Mary's was a singularly perfect nature."

"All her acquaintances say that. And the little girl, the *protegee*—what of her?"

She spoke more rapidly than was her wont, as though she were anxious to avoid any pause in the conversation; and he felt that she was warding him off, and unconsciously his manner became colder towards her.

"That is a matter that has been troubling me," he said. "She is such a child that it is impossible to make her understand certain things. Yet of course she cannot go on living at the Towers in the old way. I hardly know what to do with her."

"Why, marry her, of course!" said Mrs. Scarlett, laughing. "That is the best and readiest way to solve such a problem as that."

"You are jesting," he said very slowly.

"Indeed I am not. Why should you think so? If all that we outsiders hear is true, she was well named 'Marvel' by you; she is a very vision of loveliness, is she not? Why, how conscious you look! I do believe that that marriage scheme has already suggested itself to you."

"Your usual clear-sightedness is at fault there," said Wriothesley, with a mirthless smile. "The only way out of the difficulty that has suggested itself to me has been my marriage with yourself."

"Ah, by-the-bye, as to that," she said, as if suddenly remembering something of trivial importance, "I have been thinking it over, and I have come to the conclusion that it wouldn't do! It wouldn't do at all. Was this the day I told you to call? But of course—how stupid of me to let it slip my memory! Well"—smiling—"you have had an escape. Much reflection has revealed to me the fact that you were born to be the husband of a better woman than I am."

Wriothesley was staring at her, looking very pale, but not offering to move from where he stood. She glanced at him furtively, and saw something in his eyes which so far affected her that she did not care, or else feared, to look again.

"You don't mean a word of all that," he said at last, with suppressed violence in his tone—"you sha'n't mean it! Do you hear?"

"Perfectly!"—with a feeble attempt at laughter. "But, after all, I do mean it."

"You do? You dare to say that to me—that you mean it, after all! Do you remember that——"

"That I made you no promise," she interrupted hurriedly, closing her fan with an impatient click, and throwing it from her. "I hope you are not going to be unreasonable. I do hope you are not going to make a scene."

"Is that all? Is that the end of it? I am to be reasonable, and not to make you uncomfortable by telling you a few home-truths. Is that what I came here to-day to hear?"

Then his voice changed to a quieter but not less harsh tone.

"What has happened? Who is it?"

"I said I wanted time," she explained, waiving the question and speaking quickly. "I asked for a week; and now, at the end of it, I beg to decline the honor you would do me. There is nothing in that to reproach me with."

"Something has happened," he persisted; "what is it? I do not entreat you to change your mind about all this—but I must know."

"If you really expected to have a different answer," she said in icy tones, "I can only say that I deeply regret it."

"Do you? That is very good of you. It is more than one should hope for that you should feel regret—— Great Heaven," he burst out, with a passion that moved her, hard-hearted as she was, "to think that the earth should hold such women as you! You who have let me kiss you and have kissed me back again, you who have fooled me to the top of my bent, only to feel regret for the victim when the moment comes to cast him aside!"

"I am not fond of amateur performances," she rejoined, looking at him with drooping eyelids and curling lips; "and to remind me of—of anything that may have occurred between us is hardly what I should have accused you of. May I be permitted to say that it is scarcely in good taste? However, I am grateful to you for this revelation—this glimpse into your inner self, as it has helped me to stifle that regret to which you so vehemently object."

"Who is it? he demanded abruptly. Her insolent scorn had not touched him; he thought only of an answer to this question that should tell him all.

She regarded him steadily for a moment.

"I think there had better be an end of this," she said.

"So there shall be when I know who has taken my place."

"Your place? What place? What is it you mean?"

"I mean to know before I leave this house the name of the man you intend to marry," retorted he doggedly.

His tone angered her even more than his persistence.

"Know it then," she cried, glaring at him defiantly—"it is the Duke of Dawtry!"

Wriothesley started, a death-like pallor overspread his face, and such a strange light came into his eyes that for the moment she was frightened; then it all passed away, and suddenly he was upon his knees before her, clasping her gown.

"My darling, not that," he cried wildly—"not that old man! Oh, the shame, the horror of it! Leonie, listen to me—be patient. You think that rank, money—those tawdry benefits that he can bestow on you—will suffice you, will make you happy; I tell you no. Hear me before it is too late. Is love—such love as I can offer—my whole heart and life—as nothing to you when compared with——"

He would have gone on, but something in her face checked him. She sank back in her chair and laughed aloud. It was a clear ringing laugh, not forced or strained, but free, and replete with amusement. She drew her gown from his fingers, and motioned to him to rise.

"You think a good deal of that love of yours," she said mockingly—"certainly more than I do!"

Her words sobered him. He rose to his feet, still looking very pale, but quite composed.

"Are you going?" she asked. "It is a pity our friendship should end like this, but it is your own fault. As I told you"—shrugging her shoulders—"you are not reasonable. You believed—I don't know"—petulantly—"what you believed."

"I believed myself your lover," replied he steadily—"I believed that I was regarded as such by you."

"If you did, you have only yourself to blame." Again her eyes gleamed angrily at him. How dared he stand there and coldly condemn her? "And there is still one thing left for me to do."

She swept out of the room into the boudoir beyond, and, presently returning, flung upon a table before him a mass of glittering gems—rings, bracelets, necklets and such-like baubles.

"Will you take them with you, or shall I send them?" she asked.

It was all so horrible, so unexpected, that for a few moments Wriothesley stood there motionless, as if stunned, and unable to realize what had happened. Then almost mechanically he took up his hat, bowed to her and left the room.

CHAPTER X.

THE cooler air outside Mrs. Scarlett's house beat upon Wriothesley's forehead and in a measure revived him. He understood at last, though as yet vaguely, that his idol had fallen from its pedestal, that it had been shattered, and all that he had deemed gold unalloyed had been after all only vilest clay. He sauntered on, not heeding the many faces that passed him, and finally he turned into St. James' Park, and there gave himself up a prey to the bitterest reflections.

Well, it was all over! An hour ago he had thought himself young, and now he knew that he was old. Who could have thought she would have been like that—so cold, so callous, so cruel? All at once a feeling of unutterable contempt entered his heart.

He left the park and turned his steps towards his club. In Pall Mall he met a man he knew, and stayed to speak to him for a moment or two. It was the usual thing—politics—the Prime Minister's speech and the reply of the Leader of the Opposition. He felt impatient, and, with a brief remark, parted from his friend and crossed the street.

In his club he settled down into a chair, and, taking up a paper, affected to bury himself in its contents. He saw nothing more than the fact that so many columns went to the page; but it sufficed him.

He hardly cared to know what the debate was about on the night before. He could see nothing but a woman's mocking face as she laughed at his love and drew back her skirts disdainfully from his grasp. Even then he had seen how beautiful she was through the treachery that enfolded her.

"Was ever book containing such vile matter
So fairly bound? Oh, that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!"

Some men strolled into the room, and one of them accosted him.

"Puzzling over that Irish question?" he asked, looking over the top of the paper. "Give it up if you don't want to risk softening of the brain. Blake came over from Ireland last night, and says the Kerry boys have made up their minds to crush England. The Horse Guards, I hear, are in an awful pucker, and the Admiralty have issued orders to man the fleet."

Wriothesley managed to smile at this facetious person, and then, throwing the paper aside, he left the room. He could not stay there without having to listen and make replies, and that was beyond him just then. He was a popular man—people were always glad to see him; but he felt he could not be sociable.

The afternoon had almost given place to evening as he left the club. He walked on aimlessly until he came to Waterloo Place, at the corner of which a carriage passed him. He raised his eyes mechanically to look at its occupant.

He saw an old man half buried in furs, although the day was almost painfully warm. The withered face was ghastly with such pigment as aged fools use with intent to keep with them the youth they have had well-nigh time to forget.

An eye-glass covered one of the bleared eyes, a stereotyped smirk parted the carefully-colored lips, as he bent forward to salute a pretty woman who flashed by in her victoria. It was the Duke of Dawtry.

Wriothesley's heart grew sick within him. He had seen him twice before, but on both occasions at night, when, even beneath the clouded light of the subdued lamps, he seemed to him a fit object for passing scorn. But now, viewed in the broad daylight, with the truthfully cruel sun lighting up each wrinkle and furrow, how inexpressibly loathsome it appeared!

And to this pitiful object Leonie Scarlett was about to surrender herself body and soul for the sake of a false ambition. The knowledge made him feel sorrowful; it seemed such a careless flinging away of life's best gifts for so paltry an object. Then he told himself that, if she could do this thing of her own free will, she was not worthy of compassion, for she was past all feeling.

He had walked almost unconsciously all up the Strand and through Fleet Street, and was in the very heart of the city, when suddenly a craving for the sweet, cool country came upon him. There he might bury himself and "dree his wierd" without this maddening hum, this flavor of hideous life that pressed him on every side. Oh, for the green hills and quiet stillness of his country home!

He stepped into a hansom, then into the train; and as the light began to fade he reached the Towers. Again he walked through the wooded uplands as on that first day of his return, and all the beauty of a perfect summer evening was around him.

"An odor of bay o'er the woodlands blown,"

was wafted by him, and the fresh, warm, resinous perfume of the fire met and mingled with it. He opened the postern-gate, all overhung with ivy, that led into the pleasaunce, and went on slowly towards the house.

Presently he could see it, and the long straight walk that led to the gardens beyond that were hedged in by walls of yew. He went towards them, thinking in a dull, uninterested way, that all hope had gone from his life for ever.

He had left England at a time when warm and lasting friendships were most likely to be formed, and all his friends were now behind him in that bright Oriental land. As for relatives, he had none. Lady Mary was the last of them, and now she, too, was numbered with the dead that love not, nor remember.

As he went through one of the openings in the yew wall he caught a glimpse of a slender and shadowy figure standing upon the balcony outside the library windows. He paused to look up at it, himself half hidden. The tall, childish form in its sombre dinner-gown of black crepe, he recognized as Marvel; and then he suddenly remembered that he had altogether forgotten her.

Her dress was made in the old-fashioned style that Lady Mary had always chosen for her—fastened close around the snowy throat, but sleeveless. Her arms, white as her throat, stood out in strong relief against the darkness of her gown. A broad black sash encircled her waist; her bright hair was gathered up and fastened into a knot on the top of her head by a little pearl comb, Lady Mary's last gift, and, therefore doubly precious.

There was something disconsolate in her attitude as she leaned against a marble pillar and looked out over the sea; but all traces of sorrow left her as she chanced to turn her head and her eyes fell upon Wriothesley.

A low cry broke from her lips—a cry of triumph and happy joy. In less than a minute she had run down the steps, had rushed across the path, and had placed one hand on each of his arms.

"Didn't I say so?" she cried. "Didn't I know it? I felt that that horrid business would be kind and let you come back to me sooner than you imagined. Oh, how glad I am to have you here again! But"—arching her brows with a sudden expression of self-contempt—"what an amount of self-pity I did waste over my lonely evening! And, after all, it isn't lonely! And March says the Pekin ducklings would take a prize at any show; and Molly, the setter, has had pups—such beauties!—and Astaroth, the foal, ran away with Peters yesterday; and—and aren't you glad to be home again?"

"Yes—very," he said, and smiled at her.

There was something so curious about the smile however that she looked at him more intently, and turned him with both her hands so that she could see his face more clearly, and then at once her joy died away.

"What has given you that strange look in your eyes?" she asked, with all a child's directness. "It was not there when you left."

"No? I acquired it on my travels then. One must purchase such things sooner or later on one's way through life. By-the-bye, talking of purchases, I forgot to bring you that doll I promised."

"Don't talk to me like that," she said, with quaint seriousness, "but tell me this thing truly. Did you learn to look like that up there in London?"

"I suppose so; though I don't exactly know how I look. You see, I have no looking-glass but your eyes at present, and they tell me nothing but that you are—at this moment, at all events—a very grave little girl." His attempt at lightness did not deceive her, and he saw it. "There—do not worry yourself about me!" he went on hastily. "I have a bad headache—dyspepsia, neuralgia—what you will."

"I know," she said sorrowfully, drawing back a little—"I know quite well about that. It means that I am not to ask you questions. 'Little girls should be seen and not heard' sort of thing. Auntie had another way of doing it. She used to ask me to pick her a bunch of flowers in the far garden whenever she wanted to speak to the rector about anything I was not to hear. But is it to go on for ever like that? Am I never to be grown up really? And, besides, when one knows why one is sent away to pick flowers, where is the use of it? Now, if you were to say to me, 'Marvel, do not, please, ask me any questions,' I should understand, and it would be far better than saying, 'Marvel, I have neuralgia,' when you haven't." Then, with quick remorse—"But I am teasing you, and you are unhappy. I wish"—wistfully—"I knew what had happened to you that I might try to make you forget it." Then she added coaxingly, "Tell me!"

She was standing on tip-toe, and with the slender fingers of her right hand she touched his face and turned it towards her. She looked so fair, so sweet, so "unspotted from the world," that he had not the heart to rebuke her; and presently there came over him a great desire to speak his troubles aloud to some one. He hesitated for a moment and then said:

"I am ruined!"

"Ruined!" She repeated the word, gazing at him blankly, and then, half unconsciously, turned her eyes upon the glowing garden, the cool meadows beyond, the distant pine-clad hills, all standing calm and serene in the dewy flower-scented evening.

"Not so far as fortune is concerned," he explained, with a bitter laugh. "My lands, my home, are still my own—as much mine as they were yesterday; but"—with a sudden dull sense of pain—"with what different eyes I gaze upon to-day!"

He ceased speaking, and seemed as though he had forgotten she was still there.

"Some one has been unkind to you?" she said timidly, speaking very softly.

"Some one has broken my heart," he replied slowly.

"Ah!" She pondered this for a while, and then said, "Was that why you came home so soon?"

"Yes."

She was silent for a few minutes as she mused over what he had said. She was

deeply grieved for him, stirred indeed to her inmost heart—and it was a most tender heart, too—yet far down in the depths of it was a little proud delight that in his sore trouble and disappointment, whatever it was, his first act had been to hasten home to her.

"Was it in London it happened?"

"In town? Yes."

"Ah, auntie often told me it was a most unrighteous place!" This was evidently a quotation, and it was spoken with almost Lady Mary's look and tone, and with a doleful shake of Marvel's graceful head. "That business of yours went wrong then? You did not succeed?"

"Perhaps I did. Who knows?" said he, with a frown. Then he sighed. "Oh, yes, it went abominably wrong! I came to signal grief over it."

"You lost your suit?"

"I lost everything. My case was dismissed without a hearing."

"It was a bad business then?"

He smiled at that involuntarily.

"Very bad—hopeless."

"And who was your enemy. A man or a woman?"

"I could not call her an enemy," said he absently—"hardly that, in any fairness. She had every right to choose as she did."

"It was a woman then!"—triumphantly. "I knew it. Look—I will tell you something!" said she confidentially. "I don't like women so well as men. They are less honest, I think." This piece of wisdom, evolved apparently from her inner consciousness, for she knew nothing of men and women, she delivered with an air of profound shrewdness. "Don't you think so?"

"Not when I look at you," he returned kindly, patting her shoulder. "I am not so blinded by prejudice that I cannot see the truth that shines in your eyes. And—don't mind what I have been saying, child. It would be a sin to burden your young mind with troubles such as mine. Forget them, and remember only that I shall in all probability outlive them."

There was a cynical bitterness in his tone now that she liked even less than the grief he had shown before, and the hot tears rushed to her eyes.

"It is a shame—a shame!" she cried indignantly. "This morning you were so happy, and now, in a few short hours, you are wretched, and all because of some wicked creature in that big hateful city. Ah, wait until I am old enough to go there and find her, and charge her with her cruelty to you, and then she shall see!"

This awful threat was delivered with a stamp upon the ground from the tiny slipper, and she raised her head with the air of an offended queen. There was quite a combative look in her soft eyes. It was a charming picture she made standing there in the gloaming, with her affectionate heart prompting her to do battle for him.

"Thank you, my little champion," said Wriothesley, with a faint smile. "If you look like that when you lead the attack, all must go down before you."

Then he sighed wearily, and turned away from her, and went moodily down the garden-path with his arms behind him, as though she had never been.

But Marvel was too faithful to take offence at that.

"Where are you going?" she cried eagerly, running after him. "Not away by yourself to think of that odious business? Oh, don't! Are you not hungry? Will you not come in and——"

She paused suddenly, with consternation in her eyes.

"What shall I do?" she said, in deep distress. "I told Mrs. Cotter not to have any late dinner for me, as you would dine in town. And now what is to become of you?"

"Don't trouble yourself about that; I want nothing."

"What have you eaten all day?" asked she, regarding him keenly. "Had you any luncheon? No? An early dinner perhaps? No? Why"—severely—"I do believe you have had nothing!"

"The best meal sometimes," said he. "But you are wrong. I had something—my breakfast this morning with you."

"And nothing else since? How foolish of you! Why, I should die of hunger if I ate nothing all day but my breakfast! Now come in with me; I am going to have tea; and I shall tell Bolton that you are starving—yes, you are; and he will see that there is something substantial for you, and champagne and things. Come now—do!"

It was impossible to refuse her; and, indeed, he began to be uncomfortably conscious that he had lived on nothing but his bitter reflections for many hours. He went with her into the house, and there let her minister to him to her heart's content.

CHAPTER XI.

A marriage has been arranged to take place between his Grace the Duke of Dawtry and Mrs. Scarlett, widow of the late George Scarlett, Esq., of Chowton Hall, Surry, and Middleton Park, Shropshire."

Wriothesley, having read so far in the society paper he held, clenched his hand spasmodically, and, rising to his feet, left the room and his half-finished breakfast, and made his way to the library.

There he paced up and down excitedly, until the first shock of the news, as seen in print, had worn off. There was an end of it all now, indeed! Hope at last was dead! He had given room to it, in spite of that scene with her, every incident of which was clearly imprinted upon his brain; he had still clung to the belief that she would relent, would at last, of her own accord, through sheer pity, break that fatal bond. There was no possibility of her drawing back now; she had blazoned abroad her engagement, so that all the world now knew of it. She meant to marry the Duke of Dawtry.

As Wriothesley's step grew slower his impatience quickened. A longing for action of some sort possessed him. Yet whither could he go—what could he do? London society was closed to him. He felt that he could not show himself there, that he could not view with equanimity the spectacle she would make in dragging that old man about with her. As to staying at the Towers, in utter stagnation, that would be to run the risk of going mad. He had thought with longing only the day before of the cool shades, the silence, the calm; but now he knew that he could not endure it, that the simple country life that left him so free to follow his own thoughts was too cruel a thing to bear. He wanted the stir and bustle of city life, and here there was no one—nothing—not a soul to exchange an idea with.

A clear voice rang through the old hall.

"In Scarlet town, where I was born,
There was a fair maid dwellin'
Made all the lads cry 'Well-a-day!'
Her name was Barb'ra Allen."

The quaint sad little ditty assailed his ears. Yes, there was Marvel certainly—a pretty child, but only that. He should have to arrange about her, of course, before leaving; and he comprehended in that moment that he had made up his mind to go abroad.

The sweet, girlish voice came near to him, rising and falling on the way.

"'Young man, I think you're dying!'"

She opened the door, and, seeing him, stopped her song abruptly.

"You here? I thought you had gone out. And do you know you left your breakfast behind you? You are busy? I am disturbing you perhaps? Well, I can go away again."

"Stay," said Wriothesley. "Perhaps it's I who am disturbing you; and all places are alike to me. What brings you here at this hour?"

"To study. From ten to eleven I read my French or German or my Latin. The rector"—with a quaintly learned air—"says Latin is the root of all learning."

"And of course the rector knows. Has he forbidden such frivolous studies as music, drawing?"

"My music I practice from one to two; my drawing later. When I go out walking, the woods, the lake, the sea, give me ever-varying views."

"What a well-regulated day! Why, you are still in the schoolroom then?" said he, in a tone of surprise.

"Oh, no!"—with a slightly offended air. "I have no governess now. I am seventeen. I am grown up. But I do all this because—because I have always done it, and because auntie would be vexed, I think, if she knew I was idling away my time."

"Faithful little soul!" said Wriothesley; and then, after a pause, he continued, "Well, I am glad you can so happily fill your days; a work that is not irksome to you will keep you from ennui and—and loneliness, and all that. I should not like to think when I was far from you that you had that mournful little expression of yours always on your face."

"When you are far from me?"

She glanced at him nervously. He paused, and then said abruptly:

"I am going abroad!"

"Abroad!"

She echoed the word faintly. She removed her hand from the table on which it had been resting, and it hung loosely by her side.

Wriothesley was not looking at her, so he did not see the expression on her face, and her voice only sounded a little softer than usual to him.

"Yes, away from this place—from England—to anywhere. I find I cannot stand it. That business yesterday has shown me that life here would be intolerable. I shall remain away for years, I dare say—for ever, I hope. Of course I shall see about you before going. There is my cousin, Mrs. Verulam"—he was speaking dreamily now, as if more to himself than to her—"she is young—a widow. She has few ties beyond that child of hers. She would be a suitable person, if it can be arranged, and——"

The girl walked over to the window and pressed her forehead hard against the cool glass.

"For ever!" she said.

It was all she had heard.

Wriothesley was still talking rather disconnectedly, but she was not listening. Suddenly she faced him, her eyes gleaming, her very lips almost white, her nostrils dilated.

"Your promise!" she cried, with passionate vehemence. "Your promise, Fulke! Have you forgotten that?"

"My promise? What promise?"

For the first time he looked at her, and noticed at once her intense agitation.

"That you would never leave me—that you would be to me what auntie was. Oh, auntie, auntie, you told me I should never be lonely again; and now——"

"If you will only listen——"

"My guardian you said you were! A guardian is one who guards, and how can you guard me if you go abroad for ever? Oh, who could think you would be so cruel?"

She sank down upon a chair, quite overcome. Wriothesley was considerably put out, and, although he was sorry for her, he felt that it would have given him pleasure to shake her.

"My dear child," he said, "people often make rash promises that cannot be kept. When I said all that you have so correctly quoted, I quite believed my home would be for the future here in England. But Fate—chance—circumstances—what you will, has ordained it otherwise. I would keep my promise if I could; but—how can I?"

"You can!" she cried, springing to her feet. "Don't you see how you can? Take me with you!"

He looked at her intently, and instantly came to the conclusion that the audacious proposal was the outcome of her supreme innocence.

"I didn't promise to do that," he said, hardly knowing what reply to make.

"I know"—in a tone of sore distress. "But your real promise—you can fulfil it so. I don't want you to live in England. I don't care where you live; I only want to be with you."

"Look here, Marvel," said he, with some asperity—"you are very young, I know, but that is no reason why you should be a—er—so utterly absurd. A moment ago you were rather annoyed with me because I imagined you to be still in the schoolroom; you wished me to regard you as a grown-up young woman; yet here you are behaving like the veriest baby. It is time you should learn that a girl of your age could not roam about the world with a young man, unless he were to marry her."

If he thought this was conclusive argument, he was very much mistaken.

"Well, why don't you marry me then?" she said, resentful tears filling her eyes.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FAIREST AND LOVELIEST.—In countries where the precious stones are commonly found, myths are found with them very similar to those associated with the commoner objects of our daily experience. Thus in Tonquin the origin of the pearl is accounted for in the following way:

There was once a Tonquinese king so well skilled in magic as to make a bow of pure gold, which, as its arrows never failed to deal death, was a sure pledge of perpetual victory. He, therefore, had no difficulty in defeating another king who attacked him. In time his daughter married the defeated king's son, and one day the latter prevailed on his wife to procure for him the magic bow, and to substitute for it another resembling it in its place. She did so in ignorance of the bow's virtues, the result being that her father in his turn was conquered and compelled to fly. Being informed by the demon of the source of his misfortune, he seized his daughter, and, drawing his scimitar, proceeded to kill her, but not before she had time to predict that, in order to afford to future ages an enduring proof of her innocence, the blood that he shed should be turned into pearls.

And surely so it must have been; for is not the spot where she was slain still the place where men discover the fairest and loveliest pearls?

Bric-a-Brac.

IN MOSCOW.—A correspondent writing from Russia says that, in a dining-room of one of the large cafes of Moscow, there is a pool of fresh water in which fish of various kinds and sizes swim about. Any patron of the restaurant who may wish a course of fish for his dinner goes to the pool, picks out the particular fish which strikes his fancy, and in a jiffy the waiter has captured it with his dip-net and sent it out to the cook.

THE CANDLE TREE.—A very curious tree is the candle-nut tree of the South Sea Islands, the fruit of which is heart-shaped and about the size of a walnut. From the fruit is obtained an oil used both for food and light. The natives of the Society Islands remove the shell and slightly bake the kernels, which they string on rushes and keep to be used as torches. Five or six in a screw pine leaf are said to give a brilliant light.

AN EASTERN ROMANCE.—Twenty years ago a rich Englishman and his wife went to Italy with a foreign courier. In Genoa the gentleman was taken ill and died. He was buried in the town and his wife stayed on at the hotel. After a time she married the courier, and from that day to this they have lived in Genoa, going in the summer to a villa on the Lake of Como, which they purchased. Neither has set foot in England for twenty years.

A REMARKABLE MONTH.—The month of February, 1866, was in one respect the most remarkable in the world's history. It had no full moon. January had two full moons, and so had March, but February had none. Do you realize what a rare thing in nature that was? It had not occurred since the time of Washington, nor since the discovery of America, nor since the beginning of the Christian era, nor the creation of the world. And it will not occur again, according to the computation of astronomers, for—how long do you think?—2,500,000 years. Was not that truly a wonderful month?

ONE GLASS TOO MUCH.—A glass of wine, for instance, changed the history of France for nearly twenty years. Louis Philippe, King of the French, had a son, the Duke of Orleans, and heir to the throne, who always drank only a certain number of glasses of wine, because even one more made him tipsy. On a memorable morning he forgot to count the number of his glasses and took one more than usual. When entering his carriage he stumbled, frightening the horses and causing them to run. In attempting to leap from the carriage his head struck the pavement and he soon died. That glass of wine overthrew the Orleans rule, confiscated their property of $100,000,000, and sent the whole family into exile.

PIPES AND SLEEVES.—Tobacco is to Corea what opium is to China and drink elsewhere. The Corean goes about with his pipe, about three feet long, held in one hand, while with the other he tries to do whatever work he is at, whether it is digging with a spade or some other employment. The result is that fifteen men can do the work of only three, for nothing will induce a Corean to relinquish his pipe for a moment. Another great impediment to work is their dress, on account of their long loose sleeves, into which they crowd every thing they want to carry. This has been recognized as such a nuisance by the king that he issued a proclamation against long sleeves, ordering his subjects to adopt short tight sleeves, which he wore himself; but the order was utterly disregarded, and the people still keep their long pipes and their long sleeves.

CURING A SICK CHILD IN CHINA.—When a child is taken sick in China the parents believe that one of its souls has wandered away and is lost, so the mother runs to the open door and cries: "Soul, come home! soul, come home!" and the father hastens out into the street and crosses the nearest bridge searching for the truant spirit. He hears the mother's wail and shouts back the cheering answer, "Coming! coming!" Then a paper horse is burned in the house, for the soul to ride home upon, and the mother still uttering her weird cry, begins to search the corners of her floor—mud, if she is poor, brick or marble, if she be rich—and the first thing of life she finds is supposed to contain the missing spirit. Often it is a flea or a beetle. When it is secured she gives a great cry of joy, wraps it in paper and places it under the pillow of the suffering child and expects an immediate recovery.

FORGETFULNESS.

BY T. A. DAYLEY.

Oh, no! we never mention her:
Her name is never heard;
My lips are now forbid to speak
That once familiar word.

From sport to sport they hurry me,
To banish my regret:
And when they win a smile from me,
They think that I forget.

They bid me seek in change of scene
The charms that others see;
But were I in a foreign land,
They'd find no change in me.

'Tis true that I behold no more
The valley where we met:
I do not see the hawthorn tree—
But how can I forget!

They tell me she is happy now—
The gayest of the gay:
They hint that she forgets me now,
But heed not what they say.

Like me perhaps she struggles with
Each feeling of regret:
But if she loves, as I have loved,
She never can forget.

IN SEVERED PATHS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "WITH THIS RING I WED THEE," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

SHE left the room hurriedly, and in her own chamber knelt down to pray. The foreboding of danger at Langarth which had oppressed her spirit when she wrote to Harold at Madeira had come upon her now with a new and darker force.

In vain she wrestled against it, telling herself that all was well with her—that joy, hope, love were waiting to crown her life; in vain she reasoned that perchance the fever of happiness that had touched her veins in her home-coming had brought a reaction of despondency; the inward voice of warning still uttered its dread whisper, and would not be stilled either by her sorrow or joy—for both these were with her, and her heart was troubled in turn by each.

The old familiar scenes loved from childhood, the tender memories rising like a cloud by every tree and nook, every turret and shadow of near Langarth, had brought back recollections of Tristram that like a tightening chain wrung her heart with all the piteous pain of love and loss.

But Harold was coming to her, and the thought of his presence was as a warm wave, aglow with sunshine, rushing up to the very lips, filling every vein with life; and she began to cling now almost deliriously to the hope of his coming.

One touch of his hand, and this cloud of gloom, this foreboding of some approaching horror, would flee away for ever; the sense of succour, help, and safety through his stronger soul grew upon her; and, when she rose from her knees, she stretched her arms out longingly towards the spirit of her lover as though to draw him towards her by some invisible force that sent an inarticulate cry through the distance that divided them.

"What have I done?" asked Carrie, turning to Pleasance as Estrild quitted the room.

"My dear, you have forgotten that beyond your light words Estrild hears her brother's voice; and, in spite of all its comfort, her return home has brought back to her some of the old horror that mingles with all the recollections that naturally crowd about her now; so she could ill bear the tone in which you spoke of things so real to her, though perhaps unreal to you."

"You mean the Langarth superstitions?"

"Yes," said Pleasance uneasily; "and it is not all a superstition. The Black Rider, as the people call him, came here on the night of Tristram's death, as he always comes when a Carbonelite dies."

"You too—do you believe in that?" exclaimed Carrie.

"Who has such cause to believe it as I have?" returned Pleasance. "The dread of that black messenger—whether man or demon—has wrecked my life."

The sorrowful lines on her fair face, the deep shadow of grief in her dark eyes broke clearly now upon Carrie's mental vision, and checked her own speech.

"I can understand," continued Pleasance, "how impossible it is for you, who have not seen our sorrow, to enter into our feelings. How can I describe to you the pain and horror of that dreadful morning when Tristram was borne home dead—he who had gone forth in the evening full of life and strength?"

She tried to steady her voice, but stopped, and with shaking lips left her words unuttered.

"Yet Estrild has been greatly comforted since she has known the manner of his death through the confession of that man Sinclair," said Carrie.

"I have not dared to ask her for the details, but I should like to hear them," said Pleasance, recovering her calm.

Carrie gave them, condensing the wretched Captain's statement, but leaving out nothing of importance.

To her surprise Pleasance listened in a sort of apathy, with face growing gray and pale; and, when the tale was finished, she rose with a deep sigh of pain.

"It is only the old story that I have heard so many times before," she said wearily—"always the hand of iron that closes on the hand of flesh; and that hand, unwilling though it may be, takes the life demanded, and a Carbonelite falls. What if it be through a sword in the hand of a friend or a pistol in the grasp of a stranger? It is ever the unseen hand with clutch of steel which deals the blow of death."

Carrie's face was full of protest, but she did not venture on words of disbelief.

"Estrild is waiting in the garden, and beckoning to you," she said, in a very dry tone.

* * * * * *

A man, travel-stained and weary, rushed up the staircase at Harold's chambers, entered his room abruptly with hurried mien, and flung himself into a chair as if breathless with his own speed.

"Doctor Arnold!" exclaimed Harold in amazement. "Why have you left Trame? What has happened?"

"He has escaped, he is gone!" returned the Doctor in a low gasping voice. "I am in a frenzied state of anxiety. I feel in a manner responsible for all that may happen. I had charge of him. I ought to have known he was not sane."

Harold gazed at him in wonder.

"Of whom are you speaking? You cannot mean Mr. Irrian?"

"Yes, yes; Mr. Irrian. He has fled—he has gone in search of his son. His mind is unhinged by that young man's strange conduct, and he has left home in a mad way to seek for him. You will remember this is what he did on the occasion of his son's first flight; and it will end in the same way—he will have a dangerous illness."

"Explain—do explain what has occurred," said Harold impatiently.

"Give me a glass of wine," returned the Doctor. "I am thoroughly exhausted."

Harold gave it, and, as the Doctor set the glass down empty, he drew his chair to the table and rested his head for a moment on his hands.

"I am trying to think," he said, "how it happened. I want to tell you, but how can I explain what is totally inexplicable?"

Harold made no reply; he seemed to need all his breath and strength to hold down his impatience.

"After you left us," continued Doctor Arnold, "things went quietly for a day or two. During this time however I saw but little of Mr. Irrian. He wrote me a note in which he said solitude and perfect quiet were best for him, as by these means he recovered his nerve sooner. I was quite of his opinion, so I disturbed him as little as was consonant with my duty as his medical attendant. At the rare times when I entered his room he always appeared tranquil, and I often found him sleeping. Once only, on awaking suddenly, his words struck me as strange.

"'Take your hand from my forehead,' he said. 'Let me rest.'

"'I am not touching you,' I answered. Then he looked up at me in a curious, searching, sad way.

"'I have been dreaming,' he said. 'Is there any news?'

"I thought he meant of his son, so I answered unwillingly—

"'There are no letters.'

"Then he looked at me as if he did not understand my words; and after a moment's hesitation he repeated the word.

"'Letters? Oh, no; I do not expect any! The newspapers—where are they? I want them!'

"I looked on his request as a good sign of returning health, so I answered cheerfully that he should have them every day.

"Oliver, the look he gave me in reply haunts me now — there was something ghastly in it. I felt my heart bound with a sudden dreadful apprehension, and I laid my hand upon his wrist. He flung it off instantly, and started up with wild misery in his eyes; then he threw himself back again in his seat like a man in despair, passing his hand across his forehead as if to thrust away some pain or pressure there. Then the thought struck me that, being shaken in nerve, he had imagined the hand that touched him was not mine, and I ventured to ask him if that strange vision had haunted him again.

"Oliver, you will scarcely credit me when I tell you his answer.

"'It was my own hand,' he said. 'You are all deceived; the hand is mine.'"

"Did he say that?" exclaimed Harold. "Then it was Mr. Irrian at the window—it was his hand I saw on the balustrade of the staircase?"

"Was it?" returned Doctor Arnold. "I have tried to answer that question to myself, but I cannot."

"But Mr. Irrian confessed it. You tell me it was his own assertion?" persisted Harold.

"Yes," said the other slowly; "but how he could deceive my senses, and make his hand appear in one room while he spoke to me from the other, is more than I can explain."

"Never mind explanations; go on, I entreat you!" rejoined Harold very impatiently.

"Well, he held out his thin hand in an odd way, smiling as he spoke, while his eyes belied his lips. They were distended in the sort of gaze into which a deadly serpent might fascinate a man, and for a moment he appeared to have no power to remove them from the contemplation of his own ghostly hand.

"'You are dreaming still, Mr. Irrian,' I said to him gently, in a soothing tone. 'Will you try to sleep again?' He caught at the suggestion eagerly, and, leaning back on the cushions I adjusted for him, he fell soon into a quiet slumber. After watching him for a minute or two, in order to feel assured he was sleeping comfortably, I stole away as quietly as I could. Oliver, that was the last time I saw him!"

Harold stared at him incredulously; his haggard looks, his weary figure leaning dejectedly over the arm of his chair, all struck him as proofs of a fatigue too intense for healthy speech. Surely now he was not talking coherently!

"I perceive you scarcely believe me," continued Doctor Arnold, rousing himself; "but I assure you I am telling you the sober truth. I have not seen Mr. Irrian again, though I have seen his hand, or the thing that haunts Trame, whatever it is."

"My dear Arnold, you are over-fatigued; you are talking at random."

"I warned you that my statements would appear incredible. Let me explain what happened. I went for a ride, and on my return betook myself as usual to the sitting-room which, as you know, adjoins Mr. Irrian's chamber. All the newspapers, which had by my orders been placed on the table, were gone. I was glad of this; to care for the news of the world outside oneself is a healthy sign; so, feeling reassured, and knowing how much my patient disliked being disturbed, I went down to the library, where I dined, and afterwards took a quiet pipe. I smoked rather longer than usual, for I felt strangely supine, unwilling to move, in fact there was a sort of lethargy over me, from which I roused myself with difficulty. I hesitated an instant at the door of Mr. Irrian's sitting-room, then decided to go in, knock at his own door, and wish him good night.

"'Good night to those that can rest,' he answered. 'Wait for me a moment. I have something to tell you.'

"I sat down to wait, but he was long in coming, and that curious stupor fell over me again; but whether I slept or not I cannot tell you. At all events to my own senses I seemed to be wide awake, when, by the light of the dying lamp, for it was nearly out, I saw a hand just in front of me, pointing peremptorily to the closed window. You will remember, Oliver, it opened on a little stone balcony, with steps leading to the garden, and by Mr. Irrian's wish it had been securely fastened and locked, the key being in my possession. There was no mistaking now the wish expressed in his pointing hand that this window should be opened. I rose, a little dazed. I could see the curtain that hung before his door move. I could not see himself; the hand was near the curtain. I called out to him eagerly—almost angrily—'Mr. Irrian, why are you masquerading with me? Do you wish the window to be opened?'

"As I live, Oliver, he answered me from within the room: 'Yes, open it; and wait for me in the yew-tree walk. I am coming quickly.'

"It was an odd request; but I was used to Mr. Irrian's odd ways, and I knew it was his habit to walk at night in this place. But now I must make a strange confession. The compelling power of that ghostly hand of his was so great that, had his voice bidden me in tones of anguish to leave the window untouched, I should not have listened to it—I should not have dared to disobey that white ghostly hand.

"I unbarred and unlocked the casement window with nervous haste, and, as I opened it, a gleam of moonlight flickered in, the lamp was quenched, the room was plunged in black darkness. I hurried down the stone stairs, I paced the yew-walk for an hour, but I never saw Mr. Irrian. The quiet of the night, the light of the stars and moon, which threw a pale glimmer through the dark leaves of the yew-trees, calmed the turmoil of my thoughts. I came to myself suddenly, like a man waking from an abnormal sleep. I felt as though the night had passed in a dream, and all that I had seen, felt, and heard was unreal. In this mood, I hastened back to the house. An intense quiet reigned everywhere; not a footfall, not a sound disturbed the silence. After listening intently for a moment, and calling softly to Mr. Irrian, I grew convinced that he was sleeping. I closed the window with a quiet hand, then went to my own room, flung myself upon the bed, and fell into a profound sleep.

"I awoke to the sound of a hurried knocking; then the man who attended on Mr. Irrian came to my bedside with white frightened face; a group of other scared servants stood at the door. His master was gone — none knew how, none knew whither. Could I tell him what orders were left?

"I could tell him nothing; I could only listen and disbelieve until I descended to Mr. Irrian's rooms and found them empty.

"On his table lay a note addressed to me, which explained the wild motive which had actuated him.

"Here is the letter! Read it, Oliver, yourself."

Harold took the slip of paper which the Doctor extracted from his pocket-book, and read the one line it contained.

"I am going in search of my son. I need his help."

"He needs it indeed," said Harold, as with a sad look he handed the paper back. "There is an intense pathos in these few words which touch one's heart. His son is cruel indeed."

For a moment Doctor Arnold was silent; then he said:

"Have you received any news of young Irrian?"

"None. And I hope we shall not meet again."

"Wait—do not judge hastily. The things unseen are greater than the things seen. Outwardly his conduct looks cruel, but it may not be really so. There, I will say no more."

"Where is Mary?" asked Harold.

"Still at Carlisle. I have withheld this news from her in mercy."

"But she has an extraordinary influence over Mr. Irrian," observed Harold. "Would it not be wise to send for her?"

"Yes—but not until I find him. Can you give me no clue, no help? Do you know nothing of young Irrian's haunts?"

"Absolutely nothing. There is no Captain Armstrong now with whom he can take refuge. How many more lives, I wonder, will be sacrificed to this young man's melancholy and erratic moods?"

"That is a far-reaching question indeed, Oliver. This time I fear his father will be the sacrifice."

"Why have you come to London?" asked Harold with sudden eagerness. "Have you traced Mr. Irrian thus far?"

"I must say both 'Yes,' and 'No' to that, because my intelligence is so vague. I came mostly in the hope that you could assist me. You know Cumberland, as you call him, better than I do, and I thought you might be able to judge what his line of conduct would be—where, in fact, he would hide."

"My knowledge of him in India would only lead to the conclusion that he was gone on some desperate adventure where he was likely to lose his life. But why trouble yourself about him? Let him go where he will; it is his father only whom you should strive to find."

"I can only find him by tracing the son. I have tracked Cumberland to London; I am sure Mr. Irrian has followed his steps, though I can no more trace them than I can the passing of a ghost."

"But how did Mr. Irrian get away from Trame? Surely you must know what road his carriage took?"

"He had no carriage, no horse; he must have left on foot, and hidden himself so completely, perhaps in the woods, perhaps by some disguise, that by the most searching inquiry I could gain no news of him. Now you can understand my anxiety, Oliver, and the necessity I am under to find his son. Mr. Irrian may be dead or dying somewhere, unknown and untended. Can you—will you accompany me on my journey?"

"Where are you going?" asked Harold quickly.

"To Portsmouth. At the booking-office of the Portsmouth mail I have discovered that young Irrian took a ticket some days ago."

"Then he is gone to sea," said Harold, with thoughts rushing fast upon him of Cumberland's voyage in the Alert, and all that followed it.

He grew pale, and strange thoughts, suspicions, fears, took a sudden hold upon his mind.

"I cannot go with you," he said resolutely. "Every day, every hour I am hoping and expecting news that will hurry me at once to Cornwall."

"Then I must go alone and instantly," returned the doctor, rising with the unwillingness of a weary man. "Stay, Oliver—your words have reminded me of something that concerns your interests greatly. Excuse my having forgotten it in my distress of mind. You will remember how nobly, how generously Mr. Irrian acted through Mary's agency, when he guessed Miss Carbonelle' life was endangered? Well, I found this letter on the floor of his room, dropped, perhaps, in his haste, or most likely scarcely read or remembered in the anguish of his thoughts of his son. You perceive it is endorsed in pencil, 'For Harold Oliver.'"

While Doctor Arnold was speaking, Harold had scanned the letter with eager eyes. It was from Lloyd's office in London, and ran thus:

"Sir:—In accordance with your request we beg to inform you that we have received news, signalled by telegraph, that a large ship answering to the description of the Venture, has been seen safe off the Scilly Isles. This vessel was largely insured by the fraudulent, bankrupt Mr. Vicat, and we had reason to believe foul play was intended; we are glad, therefore, to be able to send you the above news of her safety."

Harold put the letter down with a flush of joy on his face.

"This is good news indeed," he said; "I shall start immediately for Langarth. I am sorry I cannot help you, Arnold, but you see it is impossible. I am all the more sorry because I owe my happiness to Mr. Irrian. Even this letter reaches me through his thoughtful kindness. Doubtless he wrote to Lloyd's for my sake."

"Yes, yes; no doubt," returned the Doctor hurriedly.

He held out his hand; and Harold grasped and retained it with a touch of self-reproach on his conscience. Mr. Irrian had done so much for him, and now, in his haste to reach Estrild, he was selfishly deserting him.

His heart smote him, and for a moment he hesitated, but the recollection of Estrild's letter, imploring him to meet her at Langarth, returned to him with sudden force, and he relinquished the Doctor's hand with the renewed conviction that he was acting rightly.

"Although I cannot accompany you, Arnold, I can aid you in one way—I can prosecute inquiries all along the road. You are going to Portsmouth; I can travel by way of Bristol; and, as I am not obliged to hurry forwards by the mail, I shall have many

chances of getting at news of Mr. Irrian if he has wandered so far."

"It is a good notion," returned his friend. "But, with one fixed, mad idea, the poor man is certainly following his son. I hope—I believe I shall find him at Portsmouth. It was the place he visited during his first attack. Well, good-bye, Oliver; you'll do all you can, I know."

"Stay one instant! Is it not worth while to go to that man Vicat and see if he has been there?"

"Why should he do that?" asked the Doctor, half turning as he reached the door.

"Well, I scarcely know; but, since he had a letter about the Venture only on the very day he left Trame, I fancied ——"

"No; you are wrong. His sole thought is of his son; he will follow him only, and reach him in a bee-line if he can."

The Doctor waved his hand, and was gone.

Harold stood a moment lost in thought, and troubled still by the sense of ingratitude that had stung his conscience.

Striving to fling this off, he began to prepare for his journey; but, while packing, the idea that Mr. Irrian might have gone to the Vicats' took fuller possession of him.

"I'll go and see—at least I can do that for him. I have half an hour or so to spare," he said, as he looked at his watch.

So, in spite of his intense repugnance towards Mr. Vicat, he was soon driving fast to the mean house in the suburb where this unhappy man was drivelling out his days.

A crowd of children, as usual, overflowed the passage and staircase.

Uncouthly shy, and yet curious as wild animals, they peeped and peered at the visitor, and then rushed away with titters and whispers which by no means added to Harold's patience as he stood waiting in the hall, where the rough servant had left him while she went to inform her mistress of his presence.

"Missus is very ill indeed, sir, and can't see no one; she must be kept quiet, the doctor says. Perhaps you will see master?" said the girl, on returning.

"There isn't much sense in pa to-day," observed one of the elder children.

Harold beckoned to her, and she drew near him in jerks, amid the breathless curiosity of the others.

"Tell your mother I am sorry she is ill; but I bring her good news, your sister will soon be home again."

"Oh, she knows it! He told her; that's what upset her, she's been fainting and fainting ever since."

"Who told her?" asked Harold quite eagerly.

His question or his voice brought on a universal scare, and the whole crowd fled in a state of wild terror or shyness.

"I will see Mr. Vicat," said Harold, repressing his repugnance to the alternative as he best could.

"I am sorry the children is so rough and shy, sir," said the maid apologetically. "But their ma has skeered them, rather." At this point she found herself at the parlor door, so she stopped abruptly and opened it for Harold to enter.

Mr. Vicat was sitting at the window in a state of radiant happiness.

"My daughter, Carrie, sir, will be here to welcome you very shortly. If you will look out of the window, you will see the exact angle at which she will turn the street corner."

Harold knew this was Mr. Vicat's daily delusion; yet, coupled with the child's assertion, it strengthened his belief that, even if wandering in dementia seeking his son, Mr. Irrian in the generous goodness of his heart had gathered sense sufficient to bring the forlorn family good news.

"Then you have been made aware of your daughter's return through your visitor?" observed Harold tentatively.

"Yes—through a visitor," returned Mr. Vicat with pompous gravity. "My wife saw him. Unfortunately she is too ill to take a journey."

"There is no necessity for that," said Harold. "Your daughter will be taken care of, and will travel to you safely."

"Yes; she is coming up the street soon. There is no question of my daughter's safety, sir. The Venture, you see, was doomed, and my niece——"

"But your visitor has told you the Venture is saved, and your niece also?"

The question struck an ugly chord in Mr. Vicat's untuned mind.

"The plan was well devised, sir; but people from the other world stepped in and ruined it. The deed of gift gave all to Gilbert. He died too soon. I should have hidden that and had the money—if—if ——"

He put his hand to his forehead and stared about him vacantly.

"You have not met an undertaker, sir, have you?" he asked abruptly.

"I have not had that pleasure," said Harold, half smiling, with mingled amusement and pity, though Mr. Vicat's reference to his evil plot had naturally at first roused only his indignation.

"You are going?" observed Mr. Vicat, still with eyes staring at him vacantly. "Then, if you meet an undertaker, you had better send him to—to—what is the place called? Langarth. Thank you; yes, Langarth. The ancients had no undertakers, sir."

"Perhaps not," said Harold, still pitiful, and oppressed, he knew not why, by a vague misgiving.

"Ah, it was a pity, it was a neglect of a respectable calling! Good-bye! I expect Carrie any moment!"

He turned his face again to the window; and Harold shut the door on him, and let himself out into the street silently.

CHAPTER LI.

"SHE'S the purtiest schooner-yacht that ever skimmed the sea," said Daniel, putting down his glass. "Who's aboard, Michael? D'ye knaw?"

"I dun'no' mor'n the dead," said Michael. "I reckon 'tis some whisht traade or other, for they don't leave a soul come ashore. They'll be like Jonah's gourd, you'll see. They comed in a night; and they'll go in a night."

"Well, and thee'st as poor-tempered as Jonah over it, Michael, simmun to me."

"Maybe I do feel a bit oogly," acknowledged Michael. "For I'd as lief have a stone thrawed at me as a bad word. Ooglíness, my dear! Why, there's ooglíness enough aboard this craft to sink her. Maybe Jonah himself is there; and they won't get no peace till he's thrawed overboard."

"So they thrawed bad words overboord for thee to catch?"

"Iss," said Michael in a slow way, as if still pondering over an unaccountable fact. "I rowed out airly this mornin' and axed 'em if they wanted a pilot, or fresh mait, or baker's traade. And a young fellow, with his hat cocked on one side, part as a magpie, shouts out, 'Sheer off, you fellow! We don't want nauthin'!' 'Yes, you do, my son!' says I. 'You want a civil tongue in your head; and, if you comes ashore, we'll give 'ee a Cornish hug and larn 'ee manners!' 'Go to the devil!' says he, mad as fire. 'No thank 'ee, my dear,' I answers, quite perlite; 'I won't step afore you. The road is yours; and you be making pretty good coorse along it too. A pleasant voyage to 'ee!' I says. 'And good-bye!' I heerd langwidge coming arter me, uncle, I can tell 'ee, as I rowd away. 'Twas hot enough to set the sea afire 'most."

"Big words swell no sails," said Daniel. "They northern seamen can carry a deal of swearin' in their holds without sinking; their ships be too good for that! What says the proverb—

"'A northern ship to keep my life;
But a western woman for my wife'?"

"So this craft be a North-country waun, uncle?" said Michael. "But my mind misgives me she's in the Preventive service now."

"Whether your guess be true, I can't say; but I reckon she've never been in these waters before to-day."

"Here be the Langarth ladies, uncle!" interposed Michael.

Estrild came across the sands, looking so bright, so fresh, so beautiful, that Daniel, who had again lifted his glass, lowered it, and turned an absorbed gaze upon her approaching figure, with eyes that beamed with pleasure.

"Purtier than a picture, Michael," he said, with satisfaction. "I reckon a fair woman on land and a sailing ship at sea be the two best things the airth can show."

"What are you spying at, Daniel?" asked Pleasance, as she and Estrild drew quite near.

Daniel pointed to the schooner lying in the roads, whose reefed sails were just catching red gleams from the setting sun.

"A suspicious craft, miss. I can't make her out. She should run for Falmouth afore the wind rises, since she don't choose to put into Langarth."

"Before the wind rises!" repeated Estrild. "Why, Daniel, there is not a breath of wind stirring."

"There'll be half a gale before nightfall, miss. Look at the sky; 'tis full of fiery flakes, easier to read than book-larning."

"But that pretty little ship would not be in any danger if a storm rose, Daniel, would she?"

"Not if she held to her anchors."

"And they have not anchored in a good place," observed Pleasance, who had taken the glass from Daniel's hand.

"That's it, miss! They be strangers to this coast, that's sartain."

"And I hope they'll keep strangers," observed Michael. "We don't want no Jonahs to be thrawed up ashore at Langarth."

This remark led to questioning, and to a history of the morose reception given to Michael that morning.

"And I say that if folks lay to off a friendly coast they shouldn't fling stones at it," observed Michael sententiously.

Estrild smiled assent and passed on with Daniel; but Pleasance lingered behind with Michael, and said anxiously—

"I hope that it is not a smuggling craft, Michael?"

"I'm afeard 'tis somethin' wuss, miss. My mind misgives me—'tis a spy."

"A spy?" repeated Pleasance.

"Well, miss, the Langarth folks have got a venture on the sea to-night; and to run in under the bows of a strange schooner would be risky work. I wish I could warn 'em to keep off."

"And can't that be done, Michael?" asked Pleasance, her sympathies instantly awakened on the side of the free-traders.

"No message can reach the Curlew now. Twenty boats might go out and not find her; she's bound to come in to-night."

"And what then, Michael?"

"Why, if we don't get the cargo out of her afore daylight, we shall be most of us in prison afore nightfall to-morrow."

"Oh, Michael, why have you made such a bad use of the good Curlew?"

"Bad use, miss? 'Tis aunly fair traade, and goods honestly bought and paid for. But I reckon 'tis a poor chance of saaving 'em we've got now. Auh, my dear, 'tis a whisht job, 'tis transportation for life to some of us, and starvation to wives and children! There, we shall fight like men, that's sartain!"

The thought of bloodshed appalled Pleasance; she grew pale, her hands and voice trembled.

"Surely, Michael, you are exaggerating the danger! That schooner is only a yacht; she is not a Revenue cutter!"

"Auh, eddn't she?" said Michael, in the tone of a man perfectly settled in his own opinion. "She's waun of the king's ships disguised a bit yacht-fashion, that's what she is! In coorse she eddn't a cutter; I never said she was! But she's a Preventive service boat, and a good—good waun too!"

"How can you be sure of that, Michael?"

"As ef I didn't knaw the cut of the jib of they fellows!" returned Michael, looking towards the distant schooner with mingled contempt and defiance. "Ef they wadn't up to some secret plot, why don't 'em come ashore like other yachtsmen for fresh mait and garden stuff, and to coosy a bit? Bless you, miss, a true yacht's crew pulls ashore so soon as they sees land, wanting aal soorts of traade; and they're sure to tell tell what gentry is aboard, making believe to like the sea. Now these chaps aunly cry out, 'Sheer off!' ef you comes nigh 'em; and they don't come ashore or lev' nobody come aboord. That's a Preventive trick I've seen afore to-day! Auh, I bain't took in by innocent looks! I reckon there'll be a fight afore morning. Good evening, miss! I must go round and warn our folks."

"Stay, Michael! Can nothing be done to prevent a fray? Think of the misery that will come of it!"

"There's aunly waun thing—ef Miss Estrild will help us, we might manage to kep clear then of a fight."

"Yes, yes. What can she do?"

"Oh, I durstn't ask her, miss; because, you see, she never have forgive nor forgot how Mr. Tristram died!"

"You want leave to hide the cargo in the cave?" said Pleasance hurriedly.

Michael nodded, then gazed wistfully out to sea towards the strange schooner, which lay still as a painted ship, her masts standing out against the fiery sky in wonderful straight clearness.

"Agin' darkness falls I reckon she'll wish she'd chosen better moorings," said Michael, with a grim pleasure. "The sea waiant bide quiet much longer; it'll be a rough night and a dark waun. Aal the better too for we! Now, do 'ee think Miss Estrild will stretch out a hand to save men's lives to-night?"

"Michael, you are asking her to connive at and share in an illegal act! She will not do it."

"Then there'll be murder here afore mornin'," said Michael, getting white and angry; "for we men have sworn that the Curlew and cargo sha'n't be seized while there's life in us."

In the excitement under which both were speaking, neither had noticed that Estrild and Daniel had turned back, and were now so close as to be within hearing of their words.

Now, to the intense surprise of Pleasance, Estrild came forward with flushed cheeks and eyes shining with a fevered eagerness; and, laying one soft white hand on Michael's arm, she pointed with the other to the little ship lying in the roads.

"Whether that ship holds friends or foes, I am resolved it shall bring no death to Langarth," she said, in a low, firm voice. "My brother lost his life through not standing by his people. I dare not follow his example, though he was perhaps right, and though I am no more a friend to this wicked illegal trading than he was; but I will grant you the use of the cave, or the park, or my house, or all that I possess rather than endanger one life at dear Langarth. Rather than that my home-coming—this time of joy—should be changed into one of mourning, I would die myself!"

"There now," cried Michael, with a glance of triumph at Pleasance, "didn't I tell 'ee so? Miss Estrild have got the right sperit in her, like the ould Squire, who showd us a blind eye or gived us a helping hand many a time in the good ould days gone by—the Lord rest his soul for it!" he concluded piously.

Meanwhile, Daniel by a sign had shown both Michael and Pleasance that during his walk with Estrild he had made a clean breast of the matter, and she was as fully aware as themselves of the danger threatening the Curlew; hence, when she came up to them, she was prepared to speak from her heart, though not her judgment.

"Consider, Estrild, I entreat you," said Pleasance, "that you will be acting against the law in what you do!"

"I have considered," she answered feverishly. "Remember what happened when Tristram helped the law. I may be wrong, or the law may be wrong—at all events it is right to make an effort to save lives. Come with me, Daniel; I will go home through the caves, and then you can see where the cargo can best be stowed. No, Pleasance, I would rather you returned home by the cliff—I know you hate caverns. Moreover, I do not wish you to appear as having any part in this illegal deed of mine."

She waved her hand to Pleasance and went down the beach with Daniel, and in a moment or two both had disappeared within the grim opening in the cliff which led to the caves.

Pleasance stood for a moment gazing wistfully down the long reach of white sand, now devoid of all life save the hovering flights of sea-birds, and then she turned to Michael with the shadow of unshed tears in her eyes.

"If sorrow comes of this deed, Michael, it will be through your sin, not hers."

"Then I'll stan' it," said Michael contendedly. "I don't reckon it no sin to save lives—lives of men with little children clingin' to their hands for bread!"

"That's your way of talking, Michael—that's how you have persuaded Estrild to an act of which she will repent," returned Pleasance angrily.

"If really needed to save lives, why couldn't you have stowed away your ill-gotten goods in the cavern without telling her?"

"As ef we'd do anything so mean," retorted Michael indignantly. "And what would be the good of et, ef we couldn't bring the carts to the grate rift in the park at the head-like of the cavern, and cart the kegs away safe afore day break!"

"Oh, I understand now why you have pledged Estrild to help you! But the Preventive men may search the cave and cart away the kegs themselves from the beach."

"Why, Miss Pleasance, what be'ee thinking of? That's roadting talk, sure 'nough. Do 'em want to be drowned, they men? They may be sarpints, but they baint fishes, to get through two fathom of say-waatur."

"Ah, I forgot that the spring-tides fill the cavern! Yes, yes—I see your evil cargo will be safe enough till morning!"

"Carts and hosses on the beach at high tide!" continued Michael, amused at the thought. "Lord, they'd be swallowed up like the host of Pharaoh."

By this time the two as they talked had reached the narrow path which zig-zagged up the face of the cliff; and here both stopped and look seawards.

The sun was setting in the waves, and flakes of this red light, dying in flame, were wafted towards them on the crests of the swelling seas, which cast the light from them with melancholy sighs as they fell darkening on the sands.

Thick clouds were rising in the south, speeding onwards to obscure the glory of the sun, but catching fire as they came and showing on their western edges jagged peaks and great rents all aflame.

"Good-bye, Michael," said Pleasance, with a heavy sigh. "The air is oppressive to-night. I wish I had gone with Estrild."

"She's save enough with uncle Daniel. Good night miss. I've got a long round to make to the farmers to borry carts. There's a power lot of 'em have goat money on this ventur', miss."

"To their shame!" returned Pleasance, raising her voice, as, winding up the steep path, she was now some distance above him.

She stayed her steps a moment to say this, half turning again towards the sea. In doing this she espied a little boat drawn up high on the beach behind the rock which projected at this point where the path began.

She pointed now to the spot, and made a sign to Michael to go round the sharp headland.

He did so at the cost of a wetting from an inrushing wave which sent its salt spray so high up the cliff that it touched Pleasance's face.

"What boat is it?" she called eagerly.

Michael was examining it with a scrutinising eye, his face set to unwonted hardness.

"'Tis a boat from the schooner, come to spy out the land!" he said angrily.

"Are you sure, Michael?"

"Her name is on the starn," he answered—"Elaine. Now, Miss Pleasance, you'll own I was right."

"No, Michael, there's no harm in boat or yacht; it is you who fancy harm. 'Conscience makes cowards of us all!'"

Rather pleased at the aptness of her quotation, Pleasance passed on, and was soon out of sight amid bushes and rocks.

"A woman must have the laast word," said Michael to himself. "A aunly waun pair of sculls," he continued, peering into the boat; "then Jonah have comed ashore by himself, aunless the crew sent 'un adrift to saave theirselves. Well, now, I reckon anyhow I'd best slip the knot of the painter, and then thic there spy wain't get aboord agin in this craaft to car' news of we, or to keep his bones from the—the fishes."

So saying, Michael coolly unslipped the rope from the stake which had been driven into the sands to keep the boat secure. Then, with a gleam of satisfaction in his eyes, he went down the long stretch of darkening sands towards the little church-town of Langarth.

Here he and two others mounted sorry horses and rode away to carry their messages to outlying farms.

Pleasance, on reaching the house, ordered her pony-carriage and drove home, as it was her wont to do in the evenings.

Living alone, as she did, she did not like to leave her little household to themselves by night as well as by day.

To Carrie's inquiry for Estrild she answered that she was safe with Daniel, and would no doubt return with him. So Carrie felt no anxiety, even when twilight slipped imperceptibly into night and a rising wind moaned painfully round the old house of Langarth.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

"If I might venture to make a suggestion, madam," said the tombstone agent, in a sombre yet respectful manner, "I should say the motto, 'He has gone to a better land' would be an appropriate one." "You forget, sir," said the lady in black, with cold dignity, "that he lived in Boston."

EVERY year of my life I grow more convinced that it is the wisest and best to fix our attention on the beautiful and the good, and dwell as little as possible on the evil and the false.

UNLESS.

BY MRS. BROWNING.

Unless you can think, when the song is done,
No other is sweet in the rhythm:
Unless you can feel, when left by one,
That all men else go with him:
Unless you can know, when unpraised by his breath,
That your beauty itself wants proving:
Unless you can swear "For life, for death,"
Oh, fear to call it loving!

Unless you can muse in a crowd all day
On the absent face that fixed you;
Unless you can love as the angels may,
With the breadth of heaven betwixt you;
Unless you can dream that his faith is fast,
Through behooving and unbehooving:
Unless you can die when the dream is past—
Oh, never call it loving!

COLLIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "GUY'S CHORISTER," "HIS GOOD ANGEL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.—[CONTINUED.]

COLLIE looked at her brother, as if to find an excuse for declining, but saw none in his delighted face. She remembered, with a little pang of compunction, that it was not too often he, poor boy, had the chance of indulging in a "good square meal," as he called it, and, instead, felt almost persuaded to accede.

He nodded vigorously at her in reply to her questioning glance.

"Come on, Collie," he said; "you needn't think twice about that. We'll look after you right enough."

Then turning to his friend—

"She'll be all serene, Treherne. She shilly-shallied about coming to the theatre at all; but she came, she'll shilly-shally about this; but she'll come. If you knew anything about girls, you would know it is always the way with them. They like to make a fuss and be pressed and pestered and bothered into doing the thing they are dying to do."

"I bow to your superior wisdom," the Baronet responded, with mock gravity—"more especially as your words agree with my desires. Then, Miss Collie, you will allow us at least to hope?"

She laughed.

"I see no means of preventing you, if you insist on it," she answered. "But Sid is a very wicked boy to make rash promises for me. Seriously, I should like nothing better than to give in; but I am afraid."

"Lobster salad at midnight never gives indigestion, and Mumm and Roederer are the true elixir of life. So you need not dread either."

"Indigestion has no terrors for me," she answered; "but—but a scolding from my aunt and cousins has. And if they should discover——"

"How could they? They are not ubiquitous, and they cannot be at home before two o'clock in the morning. Long ere that, you will be in bed and asleep."

"Or rather making up the fire for their arrival, and having the kettle boiling for tea."

"What a horrible shame! You don't mean to say you are compelled to sit up for them?"

"Indeed she is," broke in her brother. "And, what's more, when they go out they insist that the fire shall go out too. I found this poor little soul shivering over a manuscript as crabbed as its authoress, with one miserable candle and a handful of half-burnt cinders to light and warm her!"

"Please be quiet, Sid; I—I forgot about it. I——"

"Don't believe her, Treherne. They make the unfortunate child into a regular Cinderella. The servants would strike if they were treated as she is. Of all the mean, miserable, stingy old screws—— Oh, well, you needn't make faces at me, Collie! But, if it worries you, I suppose I must shut up, though it is quite true," the boy finished, as he saw his sister's eyes fill with large tears.

Treherne looked at her curiously.

"Yet you love them?" he questioned.

"I can't help it," she answered piteously. "I have so few to love or to love me that I must make the most of what I have. And I think it is my nature to grow fond of any one I live with."

He muttered something under his heavy moustache, then turned towards the stage, and did not speak again till the performance was over.

As the green curtain fell, they all rose, Collie with a heavy sigh.

Treherne wrapped her shawl closely round her.

"You will come?" he whispered. "Don't spoil all the happiness you have given me this evening by saying 'No' now."

It was a delightful sensation to the friendless girl to be so protected, and there was an air of proprietorship and authority about the young man which had its own peculiar charm, and which inclined her to yield.

"You are sure it is not wrong?" she questioned. But, as she spoke, she took his proffered arm, and the trio went in search of supper.

To the boy and girl it seemed an enchanted meal.

The dainties were fairy dainties and the wine nectar fit for the gods. And never surely before had talk been so brilliant or merriment so spontaneous

As they sat there, unmindful of all save themselves and each other, twelve o'clock struck.

Collie jumped up hastily.

"You must take me home, Sid," she said. "Cinderella must not delay another instant. Ah, see, already my glass slippers have turned into mere prosaic kid!"

She held out her dainty foot for a moment, as her brother and his friend rose.

Treherne laid his hand on the boy's shoulder, and gave him a slight warning glance.

"You are nearer your diggings here, Sid, than you would be in Portman Square, and, as you have to be up betimes in the morning, you had better let me take your sister home."

She started.

"Oh, no!" she cried quickly. "Sid, you must come with us."

"There, that's all right," the boy answered, with some embarrassment. "Treherne will take good care of you. Good night; hope you won't get into a row;" and, before she could detain him, he was gone.

"I need not trouble you, Sir Geoffrey," she said nervously. "If you will only put me into a cab, I shall get home quite safely alone."

"Do you imagine anything I could do for you would be a trouble?" he returned. "And do you fancy that, if I had a jewel in my keeping that I prized more than anything in the world, I should let it out of my possession for one moment that I could retain it? Come, here is a hansom!"

They entered it silently, and neither of them spoke a word during the drive. Not until they stood on the steps of her aunt's house did she break the silence.

"I cannot tell you how I thank you for this evening," she said. "I shall look back to it as the most actively enjoyable one of my life."

"Heaven knows I want no thanks for what was done with purely selfish motives!" he answered. "But if, in your generosity, you still bestow them on me, let them come in the shape of a promise to repeat it."

He was holding her hand as he spoke, and he drew her a little nearer to him. She shrank back, her heart throbbing violently.

"Good night," he said softly. "Good night, good-bye! It is only for your sake I part with you so soon. Had I but myself to consider, the words should never be spoken. Again good night."

"Good night," she answered, looking up at him shyly.

Then a great temptation seemed to seize him, and she looked so lovely in the bright moonlight that perhaps it was pardonable.

He caught her in his arms, his lips almost touched hers, when the door opened, and Nora Burnett, beautiful, indignant, and outraged, stood there looking at the pair, her mother and sister forming an angry background.

With an imprecation on his lips and an ominous light in his eyes, Sir Geoffrey Treherne faced the trio.

Collie, pale and shivering with fear, shrank to his side for protection.

Her cousin looked at her with a glance of withering contempt.

"Come in!" she commanded at last; and her tones were harsh and cruel. "For the sake of the common blood which I am ashamed to feel runs in our veins we will give you shelter for to-night—to-morrow you shall seek another refuge. What?" she added, as the girl, stupefied with terror, did not move. "What? Have you not disgraced yourself and us sufficiently to-night without letting the whole neighborhood into the secrets of your amatory amusements? To-morrow——"

Treherne took a step forward, raising his hat politely.

"To-morrow," he interrupted, "I will do myself the honor of calling upon you ladies, and of suggesting to Miss Marchmont a refuge which would be at least permanent, and which, should she accept it, would, however poor, prove kinder than the one which has lately sheltered her. In the meantime, I would remind Miss Nora Burnett that her cousin has not had the valuable experience and training which have taught her to see wickedness in an innocent pleasure, and would beg her to abstain from bespattering Miss Marchmont's purity with verbal mud. And now allow me to wish you all a very good night."

CHAPTER IV.

IT was the morning after the eventful scene. Collie had gone to bed in the deepest disgrace, uncoddled and unspoken to, but told by the ominous looks of her aunt and cousins that their wrath was only asleep, and that the storm would surely break.

Very little rest had the poor child found in her miserable, ill-furnished little bedroom, where generally she was so thankful to lay her weary head on her hard pillow.

A thousand thoughts had driven sleep away from her.

First, there was the threat that, after what had passed, her aunt's house was no longer to be a home for her.

What should she do if they turned her out, helpless, friendless, penniless, as she was?

Where could she go—of whom seek counsel? It was impossible that her brother, already hardly pressed to find the means of living for himself, should take the burden of another upon him, even if it should only be till she found some occupation.

Then Sir Geoffrey Treherne's words rang in her ears, and she flushed and trembled as she recalled them.

Even her ignorance and humility could find for them but one interpretation. He loved, he wished to marry her!

It seemed almost impossible. She had seen him so seldom, and till this wonderful night had scarcely exchanged words with him.

She had looked upon him always as the exclusive property of her cousin Nora, and had never dreamt of the possibility of rivalling her.

In her honest humility she was intensely grateful to him, and she felt an inexpressible longing to accept the love he seemed so willing to bestow.

Yet, could she marry him? The old feeling of distrust, which had been almost obliterated by the delights and events of the evening, rushed back upon her now that his influence was removed, and a sensation of dread took the place of the charm which in his company she had experienced.

She tossed her head feverishly on the pillow and threw back her long brown hair uneasily.

"If only I knew what is right for me to do," she moaned. "Perhaps, if I humble myself to my aunt, she may relent, and let me stay with her."

She rose, and, kneeling by the window in the moonlight, prayed for help, and then, worn out both in mind and body by the unwonted excitement, threw herself again upon the bed, and slept.

A glorious winter sun was shining when she awoke. She rose, and, dressing hastily, hurried downstairs.

There was no one in the sitting-room, and its cheerless uninhabited look chilled her to the bone. She sat sadly looking out upon the square, and watching the passers-by, who, to her morbid imagination, seemed abnormally happy.

A foot-step sounded on the staircase, which she knew was Bertha's, and at once the girl determined to try to enlist her on her side.

Then, with a chill at her heart, she remembered the worse than undone task, the ruined manuscript.

Her cousin entered without greeting, her face ill-tempered, she herself evidently on the look-out for grievances.

"Where—where is my—my manuscript?" she began at once, speaking with great asperity.

Collie ran to her and seized her right hand.

"Oh, Bertha," she cried, "forgive me! I—I——"

"You have not finished it? You preferred your amusement to your duty? Well, it is what I might have expected!"

"It is worse than that. It is——"

"It is what? Can't you speak properly, instead of stammering out half sentences with no meaning? What have you done with it?"

"I have—I have destroyed it," faltered Collie.

"Destroyed it!"

Miss Burnett was almost tragic in her wrath.

"You miserable little wretch, you horrid, wicked girl, I wonder how you dare admit such a thing! How can you stand there and tell me that you have deliberately destroyed what I took such pains with—an article the Fortnightly would have been certain to accept? But I will see that you are punished for it. I will have you taken up; you shall be put in prison, you shall!"

"What on earth are you raging about, Bertha!" interposed Nora, entering with her mother. "I thought it was agreed that I should be the one left to deal with our delightful cousin."

"So you may in what concerns you; but surely you will acknowledge that I have the right to speak when I tell you that she has deliberately destroyed my manuscript, and has the audacity to stand there and boast of it."

"Indeed I don't!" cried Collie imploringly. "It was entirely an accident, and an accident I would give anything in the world to repair."

"You went to the theatre to assuage your grief, I suppose," observed Nora mockingly. "Come, Bertha," she continued, addressing her sister, who had by this time subsided into tears over her lost treasure—"that's enough! You can very soon write another quite as good"—this with a touch of sarcasm in her tone. "And you may be very certain that Miss Marchmont has had her last chance of destroying anything in this house. I daresay she will not be much surprised to learn that, as we have characters to guard, we must request her to find some other home. She will be able, I should think, to pack up all her valuable possessions in a couple of hours, and after that we must beg her to relieve us of her presence. Nor need she let us know anything of her future movements, as they can have no interest for us."

For a moment Collie stood bewildered. Then she threw herself upon her knees before her cousin.

"Surely you do not mean it!" she gasped. "You know—you must know that I have done nothing to disgrace you myself. If I sinned, it was only from want of thought, and because I was so lonely, so——"

"Don't trouble yourself to make any more excuses. You would have us believe that this is the first time you have indulged in this 'innocent pleasure,' as your friend called it. Very likely! If we had but known how to read between the lines, we should easily have understood why so often we returned to find neglected work and dying fire. Well, I don't regret the headache which sent me home early last night. How often, I wonder, might I have found you on other occasions in the same loving attitude with Geoffrey Treherne or—some one else?"

"Never—never!" the girl cried, in an agony. "I swear to you that it is the first time I ever left the house in your absence."

Nora smiled contemptuously.

"You may save yourself the trouble, for I don't believe you. Only a few short hours before I found you in his embrace, you had vowed that 'that man seemed like a snake to you.' Go!" she cried, with sudden passion, drawing away her skirt from the girl's detaining grasp. "Go where you like, but where I shall never see you again! I hate the sight of you—you are both a liar and a thief!"

Collie sprang to her feet. Her face was deathly pale and her eyes had a wild hunted look.

"I will go," she rejoined, "but Heaven knows where; and, if harm befall me, it is you who are to blame!"

Then she turned to her aunt—

"Have you not a kindly word for me?" she asked.

"Oh, dear—oh, dear!" moaned Mrs. Burnett. "All this is dreadfully upsetting, and I wouldn't have had it happen for the world! After stealing away Bertha's manuscript and burning Nora's sweetheart—at least, I mean the other way, of course, you couldn't expect, Collie—you really couldn't, even though you are my poor dear sister's child—to be kept on in a respectable house, living, as one might say, in the lap of luxury, and still——"

"Be quiet, mamma!" broke in Nora. "We have heard enough!"

"Exactly what I say, that I can't help agreeing with you, my dear. And Collie must understand that she need not send to me for a character if she does manage to get a situation, though what she's fit for I don't know."

"A situation?" the girl echoed despairingly. "Where shall I find one? What can I do? Oh, aunt—Nora—Bertha—for the love of Heaven, have some pity on me! I have no one in the world to turn to but you. Treat me as the meanest servant in the house, give me what work you will, and I will do it thankfully. Only forgive me this once, and do not turn me away from your door disgraced!"

"We are not responsible," said Nora coldly, "for the disgrace you have brought upon yourself. You heard what I said. Two hours you may have to prepare and make up your mind to go, and then we wish never to set eyes on you again."

Pale as death, the girl turned away.

"Good heavens," she cried, "was ever any one so friendless as I? There is no one who will help me!"

But as she spoke the door opened, and her white hands were caught in a sudden clasp.

She looked up and saw Geoffrey Treherne. His eyes were bent on hers with a strange expression in them.

He stopped down, and, with the air of a knight-errant, kissed the slender fingers he held. Then he stood erect, and, still holding the girl by one hand, faced her adversaries.

"I need not waste words," he began sternly. "I had come to ask the consent of one of Miss Marchmont's nearest relatives to my paying my addresses to her; but the cruel repudiation I have just heard of the claims of kinship and innocence makes it evident that I may spare myself the trouble and appeal to herself alone. Miss Collie," he went on, turning to the trembling girl, "you called yourself friendless just now. Will you take me to be your helper and protector through life? Will you trust yourself to me?"

At the word "trust," the old feeling of dread came over her, and she tried to draw her hand away from his grasp.

Nora laughed scornfully.

"How coy she is all of a sudden!" she sneered. "My modest cousin does not like her wooing to be done so publicly. She prefers it at midnight, under the stars. Come, mamma, come, Bertha, let us leave these two to their billing and cooing. Tell Sir Geoffrey that he is perfectly welcome to his charming piece of innocence, and that we are quite content to have her taken off our hands by anybody. But," she added, her manner changing suddenly and her breast heaving as she clenched her hand, "let them beware how they ever come into my presence again!"

"You may be sure you will never be troubled by me," the young man retorted, bowing gravely, and opening the door for the ladies; "and, if Miss Marchmont does me the honor of putting her future into my hands, I can answer for it that she too will not run the risk of so disturbing her happiness either. So, in place of our usual 'au revoir,' I have the pleasure of at last saying a final adieu to all."

Nora swept past him in a storm of passion and the others followed, scarcely less discomposed. Then he turned to Collie.

"Now," he said, "I await your answer."

"What shall I say?" she murmured. "What ought I to do?"

"I love you, Collie," he went on, "and I have loved since first I met you. I am sure I can make you happy—happier, at least, than those women who have just gone. You say you have no friends, no one to whose house you can go. Sid cannot help you, and——"

"It is all that makes me so afraid," she broke in. "I know that, if I yield to the temptation of being cared for and comforted, it is only because I am weak and cowardly, and not because I love you as a woman should love her husband. For I don't—I——"

He smiled, as if he knew that the battle was nearly won.

"My dear," he said, "I don't expect you to be as fond of me as I am of you. But I am quite content to accept what you can give me, and to trust to the future. Think of me as a friend—a friend who not only will protect you, but may help your brother."

"Sid? I can do nothing without asking him first. I——"

"I have prepared myself on all sides," Treherne answered. "I saw him this morning and made all the arrangements necessary to be carried out, should I be happy enough to gain your consent. I bring you a letter from him; look—here it is!"

She tore it open with trembling hands, and read, in the boyish writing, extravagant eulogy of her lover, enthusiastic delight at her prospects, and, more than all, anticipation of the great advantages such a marriage would bring to him.

She lifted her eyes to Treherne's face, earnest inquiry shining in them.

"Will you really help Sid?" she asked. "Will you give him a chance of getting out of the dreary pinched life he is forced to lead?"

"My dear, I—or you—will make his fortune!"

She laid her hand in his, and in a moment he held her in his arms and covered her face with kisses.

"Oh, don't," she cried, shrinking back. "I have known you such a little time. I cannot bear it!"

"Forget that, darling. Don't think of the short time you have known me; remember only that by this hour to-morrow you will be my wife!"

"Your wife! To-morrow!"

"Yes," he answered firmly. "All arrangements are made. To-night your brother will take care of you; after that he could not. I told him to apply—forgive me for being so sure—for leave to-morrow, and he will be our our—only wedding-guest."

"But—but——"

"No 'buts,' darling. You must consider the marital authority assumed already, and in a week you will thank me for having made up your mind for you. Come, dear, remember that a good part of your two hours' grace has already flown, and ask yourself where you will go if not with me. But," he added, with certainty, "you will go with me. Leave me now, darling, and get your things together. I will wait for you outside."

She walked slowly to the door, then, turning round, faced her lover again.

"Are you indeed to be trusted, Geoffrey?" she asked. "Will you never make me repent giving myself to you so strangely and so hurriedly?"

He looked at her steadily with a slight frown.

"My dear," he replied, a little coldly, "if ever you repent marrying me, it will only be your own fault. Go now!"

And she went.

CHAPTER V.

"GOOD-NIGHT, dear old boy! Don't be long before you come back for your revenge!"

"No fear, Treherne. As soon as we can afford it, you may count on seeing us again. If your attractions were not sufficient, your wife's are irresistible."

The clock was striking five as these words were spoken.

Already London streets, even on this winter morning, were beginning to be busy with a stream of the toilers who have to work early and late for their bread.

But the men who were leaving Treherne's rooms were none of these.

The little group of three or four who parted with him thus were young and debonair, with no signs of care or toil about their aristocratic features and pretty white hands.

They were all in evening-dress, and the one who had last spoken, a handsome man about thirty, wore a rosebud in his button-hole, which his light ulster, carelessly thrown back, failed to hide.

Treherne stood for a few moments watching their retreating figures with a sinister smile on his lips. Then he turned away and mounted the steps.

"Back again," he muttered sardonically. "Ay, you will come back and back again till I have sucked you as dry as the spider does the fly. Stupid young fools—how smitten they all are with my wife! Well, she has paid me for her keep already, and, with a few lessons, will be perfect. It was amusing to see Stourton stake his money, and blunder along anyhow because he could not keep his eyes off her. I must have a good haul to-night, at least. Hallo, Collie!" he said carelessly, as he entered the room and found her standing where he had left her. "Not gone to bed yet? Come now, be off! I can't afford to let you spoil your good looks by want of sleep."

"I must speak to you first," she answered, in a half-whisper. "I cannot rest till I do."

"Oh, nonsense!" he said, yawning. "Anything you may have to say can wait till to-morrow. I am dead tired."

The two were in a very large handsome room.

In the middle was a green-covered table littered with cards, while empty champagne-bottles and glasses showed that the meeting had been a festive one.

Ends of cigars and the heavy atmosphere proved that there had been little restraint to the visitors' enjoyment.

Collie, in rich white satin, with a cluster of blood-red roses at her breast, looked exquisitely lovely. She stood with one hand laid on her heart, as if to still its beating, and her eyes, with a frightened yet defiant glance, were fixed upon her husband. He, lounging on the sofa, surveyed her with mixed curiosity and admiration.

"I must speak to-night," she said again. "Geoffrey," she hurried on, as if to give him no time in which to refuse to hear her; "is this—this evening's experience to be repeated? Am I married to a common sharper?"

For a moment his eyes flashed warningly; then they relapsed into their usual sleepy calm.

"Don't say that again, my dear," he drawled. "It is not a polite inquiry, or a nice insinuation. If you mean to suggest that I don't play fair, you are either wilfully or woefully mistaken, and in either case I must ask you to take my word for my probity."

"I don't pretend that you have marked cards or loaded dice," she broke in passionately. "Heaven forbid that I should have married such a deliberate scoundrel as that! But, Geoffrey, it is not fair play to bring these young men here—to beat them with wine while you yourself, though your head is far stronger than theirs, scarcely taste it, till they hardly know what they are doing, and then win their money from them. This is the third time now that I have seen it, and it makes me worse than miserable. It——"

"Enough, my dear, about your sensations! If these young men choose to come and drop their money here, you may be sure that they are content with the value received. If they are poorer in pocket by the end of the evening, they are greatly richer in experience, and it would hardly be fair if the instructor of youth, who gives his time and trouble for their benefit, were not to have some slight reward. Besides, my child, without such remuneration, how would he live, and how supply his wife with these expensive, if elegant gowns, to which, I must admit, she does the utmost credit."

"Are they bought with blood-money, Geoffrey? Are they paid for with what you have robbed—yes, robbed these poor boys of? Oh, Geoffrey, Geoffrey, if this is how you live—if this is to be my existence hereafter, why did you marry me—why take me from a life where I was honest at least; and not degraded?"

His face darkened.

"'Robbery—degradation!'" he said sternly. "I told you before that I did not wish to hear words of that sort applied to me and my doings. Whatever I married you for, it was certainly not to be preached at or bored by sermons out of season. You may as well know now as later, what you seem to have guessed, that my income is derived from friendly contributions given as you have seen them given to-night. The portion that is not would scarcely, I fancy, pay for those roses at your throat—Stourton brought them to you, did he not? certainly it would not defray a fifth part of the cost of your dress. Take the pretty things, my dear, while you can get them, and, if you are too squeamish to care to know, make no inquiries as to where they come from; your husband is a gentleman, though a confoundedly hard-up one, and, as whist in his one talent—a hereditary one, for my father gambled away all the money and estate which ought to have been mine, and left me only my wits and an excellent education—in cards—to depend on—he is but acting up to Bible precepts in utilizing it. Don't trouble yourself about right or wrong. Trust me; I can look after the morals of both of us."

"I cannot trust you, Geoffrey. I ought never to have trusted you. Oh, why, why did I not believe my own instincts instead of your words? Why did I refuse to listen to the voice which told me I should not have confidence in you?"

"As you did not, perhaps you will kindly hear mine now. And please pay attention, for it is time you were in bed, and I do not wish to have to repeat my instructions. I must beg, Collie, that, when my friends come to see you, you may be more cordial and pleasant—more generally attractive, in fact. When you are asked to sing, sing; when you are invited to flirt, flirt!"

She looked at him with eyes full of horror.

"You—my husband—tell me to do this?"

"Certainly! One must walk in the ways of the world. Besides, the more the attention of these young men is taken up with you, the less they have to bestow on their cards, and the more certain they are not to turn rusty and refuse to play more. There is Stourton, for instance; he is head over ears in love with you already, and by dint of a little encouragement you may make him bleed as freely even as I can wish. He has plenty of money, and does not know how to waste it with any satisfaction to himself, so it may as well be in my pockets, who do. I don't object to your slight coyness to-night about accepting the roses, especially when he wanted you to return one after touching it, but it had better not continue. A thing of that sort is piquant just at first; but it soon gets tiresome, especially in a married woman. Don't be alarmed at my having seen the little by-play—it is a way I have to notice everything; but I am a most convenient husband, and there is not the smallest danger of my calling anybody out."

"For Heaven's sake, stop!" the girl cried passionately, the crimson flood rushing over cheeks and neck. "Remember I am your wife. Don't insult me by speaking again as you have just spoken, or I shall hate you!"

"I do remember that you are my wife, and that, being so, you are bound to obey me. You asked me a little while ago, my dear, why I married you, and, to set things on a proper footing, I may as well—though really it is dreadfully late—explain now once for all. Let me tell you, then, that I wavered long between you and your cousin Nora. You were about equally handsome. I must remind you that you were then heavily handicapped by your dress, or want of dress, and undoubtedly beat her by a head now—and she, I fancied, was of the style most generally admired. But there was a sort of look about her that made me feel she would take the bit between her teeth and not be so easy to manage as you; and that look decided me. I wanted a wife, for I found that my own attractions were beginning to pall on my young friends. For their sakes I wished her to be beautiful, for my own, submissive; and I flattered myself that, in choosing you, who had every reason to be thankful to any one who would take you from the life you were leading, I was making a wise selection. Don't, I beg, give me cause to repent it."

"Then you did not—do not—love me?" she asked miserably.

"I shall be very fond of you, Collie, if you do as I wish and do not make yourself ridiculous by stupid scruples. As for the romantic love that school-girls dream about, and you, I suppose, mean, you must be content to do without that. At eight-and-thirty a man of the world has outlived his illusions, and has not much heart left. He likes his wife as he likes his dinner, but neither rouses a grand passion. The time for the first is over, for the other, not quite arrived."

The girl covered her face with her white hands.

"I am justly punished," she cried. "I might have known it was a sin to marry without love; but I was so lonely—so lonely—I longed so for love, and thought I had found it!"

"Well, there is Stourton's, laid most openly at your feet! Why should you not avail yourself of his devotion?"

She started as if she had been stung.

"Again," she exclaimed—"again my husband insults me! Oh, dishonorable, mercenary, false—I will not humble myself to you! I am your wife, I know; but you shall not make me your decoy. I will not give my conscience to you—you shall not degrade me to your own level. My soul, my honesty are my own, and, Heaven helping me, I will keep them unsullied while I live. You shall take back the jewels and the dresses you have given me. As I came to you, I will leave you to-night, never, I pray Heaven, to look upon your face again."

"And where will you go, madam?" he asked sarcastically.

"I will find some refuge," she answered passionately. "Heaven will help me. Or, if there be none, better to lie down under the clear sky than here in this den of villainy."

"You are really too tragic, my child, and, were I not the best-tempered fellow in existence, would wreck your happiness for this storm in a tea-cup. Do let us get it over quickly, or it will be breakfast before it is bed-time. Come, Collie, good night, or rather good morning!"

He spoke as if he were soothing a petted child, and at the same moment he put his arm tightly round her waist as if we were going to kiss her. She drew back with a shudder.

"Don't touch me!" she cried. "Never touch me again! Henceforth we are as strangers—would that we could be so really! I will leave you to-night. I will go to my brother, and ask him to help me; and, though he is so strangely infatuated with you, I know that, when I tell him what you are, he will take me away and save me from you."

"Softly, softly!" said Treherne. "It would be a pity for you to run off under a mistaken idea, and I have every reason for thinking that Sidney would side with me, and not with you."

"He is a gentleman!" she flashed out. "The same blood runs in his veins as in mine, and he would not stand by to see his sister dishonored. He would rather die!"

"And yet, I repeat, I think he would take my part."

Treherne spoke the few words in a curiously significant tone.

His wife turned and looked at him, and, as she noted the expression on his face, the color ebbed out of her own.

"What do you mean?" she faltered.

"Exactly what I say. Or, if you prefer me to alter my phrase to one more explanatory, let me tell you that Sidney dare not differ with me on any important matter."

"Dare not?"

"Dare not. Now Collie," he went on, his voice changing suddenly from a mocking tone to one of hardness and determination, "let us make an end of this. I wish to hear no more nonsense about my wife leaving me, or refusing to submit herself, body, soul, and conscience, to anything I may command. In short, I wish you to understand that you are mine—my chattel, to be dealt with exactly as I wish, and to obey my desires like a piece of machinery in good working order. If you give me nothing to complain of in the way of submission, you will find me a most affectionate husband, humoring your every whim and gratifying each wish you express. If, on the contrary"—he held her arm in his strong clasp and looked closely into her frightened eyes—"you disobey, or attempt to disobey me, not alone will you pay dearly for it, but you condemn to suffer for your wilfulness him whom you pretend to love more dearly than yourself—I mean your brother."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

We can endure no vanity as easily as our own.

Scientific and Useful.

BURNS.—A French remedy for burns is to allow the contents of a syphon of seltzer-water to flow slowly over the affected parts. It quiets the pain speedily and expedites the final cure.

GLASS.—Glass-blowing is an art nearly 4000 years old, perhaps older; yet there has never been any device discovered to take the place of the human lungs in the blowing. Bottles, however, are blown with a mold and mechanical bellows.

IN SNOW OR FOG.—A correspondent writes: "Reading accounts of so many being lost in the snow and fog, I would call your attention to a simple means of determining the position of the sun at any time of the day, which is by placing the point of a knife blade or a sharp lead pencil on the thump nail, which will cast a shadow directly from the sun, no matter how thick the snow or fog is. Try it."

IRON MOULDS ON LINEN.—To remove them, place the linen over a basin containing boiling water, strain it tight, and wet the stain with water. Then carefully drop on it a few drops of diluted spirit of salts from a feather or hair pencil; wash carefully in clean water when the stain has disappeared. A simple method of removing stains from linen is to dip it in pure buttermilk, and dry it in a hot sun; then wash in cold water, and dry it, two or three times a day.

WATCH LIGHT.—Place a piece of phosphorus the size of a pea into a long glass phial, and pour oil just as hot as the hand can bear, carefully over it till the phial is one-third filled. The phial must be carefully corked, and when used should be unstoppered a moment to admit the external air, then closed again. The empty space of the phial will then appear luminous, and give as much light as a dull ordinary lamp, and just sufficient to see the face of a watch. Each time that the light disappears, on removing the stopper it will instantly reappear. In cold weather the bottle should be warmed in the hands before the stopper is removed. A phial thus prepared may be used every night for six months.

LOSS OF POWER.—The common practice of surrounding incandescent lamps with opal globes, or globes of ground glass, leads to a loss in the one case of from 40 to 60 per cent. of the light, and in the other of from 25 to 35 per cent. A simple method by which the character of the light can be softened without experiencing so great a loss of intensity as has been proposed, and consists in covering the globe of the lamp with a film of ordinary collodion, which can, by adding successive films, be made of any desired thickness. The reduction of the light of the lamp does not, it is said, with this method exceed 10 per cent., and the system possesses the further advantage that the film can at any time be removed by simple friction. The collodion should be applied cold, and the globe must be thoroughly dry and clean beforehand.

Farm and Garden.

RAW AND BOILED.—Raw milk digests in a shorter period than boiled milk; hence milk for young stock should not be boiled, but warmed.

WATER PIPES.—As far as possible see to it that all drinking water passes through iron pipes and not through wood, which decays, and favors germs of disease, nor lead, which is a subtle poison.

IN GERMANY.—Horticulture is taught in the common schools of Germany, the pupils being required to bud, graft, transplant, plant seeds, cuttings, etc., and they are given instructions on the subject of plant-growth, adaptation of varieties to soil, climate, etc.

CARROTS AND TOMATOES.—Carrots act directly on the liver, and, therefore, young carrots plainly boiled, or carrot soup, which is made of older carrots boiled and pulped through a sieve into a little weak stock, are extremely wholesome. Tomatoes stimulate the liver and the stomach generally.

DROUGHT.—The drought in some States decreased as it extended toward the forests. The importance of preserving the forests as an aid to a supply of rain during the growing season, cannot be too strongly urged. The farmers in each section should form clubs for the purpose of protecting the forests.

SMALL LOSSES.—Small losses are not always observable. A loss of one quart of milk per day, at 5 cents per quart, for 200 days, amounts to $10, or more than the interest on the value of the cow. It should be the object of the dairyman to gain an additional quart, and to keep up the flow at all seasons.

BEES.—Hives should always have a free circulation of air around them, as when placed on the ground not only is dampness induced in the hives but the bottoms are liable to rot. The hives should be kept in a cool place, also, in order to prevent the accumulation of too much heat inside should the weather become warm.

WOOD.—Wood employed for building, which is not exposed to heat or moisture, is not likely to suffer from the ravages of insects; but, if it is placed so that draughts of fresh air cannot reach it, to prevent accumulation of products of decomposition, decay soon sets in, and the decaying albuminous substances, acting upon the fibre, cause it to lose its tenacity and become a friable mass.

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The Shortest Way.

We are all placed on our insignificant whirling bullet of a world like shipwrecked folk on some frail raft. Around us the billows of doom roll heavily, and ever and anon one of our companions is swept away into the seething darkness. Gradually our frail support glides towards the mighty whirlpool that must engulf us, and we feel the drag of the deadly current that draws us downward.

Take it at its longest, our little life is but a hurried sojourn among other fated mortals, and not one of us can do more than battle feebly for a brief space with the inexorable master, Time.

An ordinary rational man might think it natural for the people on the frail raft to spend their petty day in trying to soothe and help and please their fellows. Considering the paltry breathing-space allowed to us, we ought surely to use the time as misers use treasure, so that every moment may be fruitful of wholesome pleasure, the pleasure that is given only by the practice of goodness.

Yet so blind are we that too many of us employ our priceless minutes in hurting others instead of in dealing forth comfort; we see the gulf before us, we know that on this earth we may never more have a chance of doing good, yet some of us turn away from the thought of our dread destiny and use the powers of brain and body that are bestowed on us in causing pain to fellow-mortals as hapless as ourselves.

When a man carries his narrowness of mind to such a pitch of meanness that he is capable of stealing life or property from another, we call him a criminal; when he steals little pleasures and inflicts little pains, we call him a disagreeable person.

The woman who matches the male disagreeable person has received various names from the wicked ingenuity of past generations, and, according to her station, we label her "shrew," or "virago," or "termagant," or "spitfire," or "scold," or "killjoy," or "randy," or even "cat"—though this last is too severe for general use. The multiplicity of names bestowed on feminine subjects hints at terrible experiences which have been endured in bygone times, and we feel a slight tremor as we ponder the exact significance of those harsh nicknames.

Who does not know the disagreeable person in private life? In the case of a man we have a suspicious being who is conscious of his own littleness, and who is eternally afraid other folk will find him out. He asserts himself by dint of small annoyances; he takes care that you shall not forget his presence; and he will contradict, or sneer, or even bully, rather than efface himself.

Any attempt at civility towards him he regards as a designing move meant to practice on his softness, and he repays urbanity with insolence. When others are merry, he likes to be sulky; when others are willing to sacrifice themselves, he imputes mean motives; he likes covert slander, sly depreciation, mocking expressions of unbelief in the honesty or goodness of his neighbors. He is a kind of porcupine and only his cowardice restrains him from discharging his quills all around at random.

A man of this sort is often humored until he is like a spoilt child; the happiest thing that can occur to him is to receive a blunt hard snub from some one who is not afraid of him.

The disagreeable man usually exerts his pleasing humor in the direction of household tyranny, and woe be to those who are under his thumb! He likes to see the timid, deprecatory smile of his wife; he likes to sting her with sly sarcasms; he is pleased to find that the children scuttle away and grow silent on his entrance; and he calls himself a good disciplinarian. He is the kind of fellow who "takes down" his wife before company, stops her in the middle of an innocent speech, exposes her ignorance if she happens to be weak in any department of knowledge, growls at the cookery, and, in short, makes every one feel a blessed relief when his back is turned and his ill-conditioned voice heard no more.

The disagreeable woman is, if possible, worse than the disagreeable man; all know the class.

Now, it is surprisingly easy to be agreeable; and therefore we venture to address the disagreeable folk thus: You are very miserable; you miss the true joy of life. And why? Because you cannot get away from your own personality. Try to interest yourself in others for a while. Remember that nine people out of every ten can be won by the simplest kindness.

Conquer your shyness and vanity; try again and again, even if you seem to fail at first, and in a very short time you will see that people will be drawn to you, and you will be a central figure in a group of light-hearted and genuinely social companions. If you feel inclined to say something nasty, stop yourself till you count twelve, and then ask of your own heart, "Should I do any good to myself or any one else by saying that? No. Very well; then I resist the temptation!"

A trifling course of such discipline will transform you; and, in place of a sour unhappy life, you will pass a life of constant quiet pleasure.

That seems to us to be advice likely to meet the wants of many. Try it, and believe us when we say that you will find the short way to happiness at last.

Truth is always the same; time alters it not, nor is it the better or worse for being of ancient or modern tradition. Many were eminent in former ages of the world for their discovery and delivery of it; but though the knowledge they have left us be worth our study, yet they exhausted not all its treasure; they left a great deal for the industry and sagacity of after-ages, and so shall we. That was once new to them which any one new receives with veneration for its antiquity, nor was it the worse for appearing as a novelty; and that which is now embraced for its newness will to posterity be old, but not thereby be less true or less genuine. There is no occasion, on this account, to oppose the ancients and the moderns to one another, or to be squeamish on either side. He that wisely conducts his mind in the pursuit of knowledge will gather what lights, and get what helps he can, from either of them, from whom they are best to be had, without adoring the errors, or rejecting the truths, which he may find mingled in them.

Sentiment and principle are often mistaken for each other, though, in fact, they widely differ. Sentiment is the virtue of ideas, and principle the virtue of action. Sentiment has its seat in the head; principle in the heart. Sentiment suggests fine harangues and subtle distinctions; principle conceives just notions, and performs good actions in consequence of them. Sentiment refines away the simplicity of truth and the plainness of piety, and, as Voltaire, that celebrated wit, has remarked of his no less celebrated contemporary Rousseau, "gives us virtue in words and vice in deeds." Sentiment may be called the Athenian who knew what was right; and principle, the Lacedemonian who practiced it.

No one walks worthily of God who ever takes His name upon his lips lightly, or refers in a jesting and trifling spirit to the solemn realities of His word or Judgment. These are just the ways in which wicked or even thoughtless persons put God out of sight amongst their companions. No one can suppose that he thinks God of importance who in his very words trifles with Him. On the other hand, a spirit of seriousness at serious times and on serious subjects is one of the strongest, as it is also one of the easiest means of honoring God before others.

We fancy that all our afflictions are sent us directly from above; sometimes we think it in piety and contrition, but oftener in moroseness and discontent. It would be well, however, if we attempted to trace the causes of them; we should probably find their origin in some region of the heart which we never had well explored, or in which we had secretly deposited our worst indulgences. The clouds that intercept the heavens from us come not from the heavens, but from the earth.

Let any man examine his thoughts, and he will find them ever occupied with the past or the future. We scarcely think at all of the present; or if we do, it is only to borrow the light which it gives for regulating the future. The present is never our object; the past and the present we use as means; the future only is our end. Thus, we never live, we only hope to live.

In beginning the world, if you don't wish to get chafed at every turn, fold up your pride carefully, put it under lock and key, and only let it out to air upon grand occasions. Pride is a garment all stiff brocade outside, all grating sackcloth on the side next to the skin. Even kings don't wear the dalmaticum except at a coronation.

A man takes contradiction and advice much more easily than people think, only he will not bear it when violently given, even though it be well founded. Hearts are flowers; they remain open to the softly falling dew, but shut up in the violent downpour of rain.

Make use of time, if thou lovest eternity; know, yesterday cannot be recalled, to-morrow cannot be assured. To day is only thine; which if thou procrastinate thou loseth; which lost, is lost forever. One to-day is worth two to-morrows.

One of the illusions is that the present hour is not the critical, decisive hour. Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year. No man has learned anything rightly until he knows that every day is Doomsday.

True repentance consists in the heart being broken for sin, and being broken from sin. Some often repent, yet never reform; they resemble a man traveling in a dangerous path, who frequently starts and stops but never turns back.

As the tree is fertilized by its own broken branches and fallen leaves, and grows out of its own decay, so men are bettered and improved by trial, and refined out of broken hopes and blighted expectations.

The Ædiles among the Romans had their doors always standing open, that all who had petitions might have free access to them. The door of heaven is always open for the prayers of God's people.

We pray for trifles without so much as a thought of the greatest blessings; and we are not ashamed, many times, to ask God for that which we should blush to own to our neighbor.

The effect of every burden laid down is to leave us relieved; and when the soul has laid down that of its faults at the feet of God, it feels as though it had wings.

Contentment is a pearl of great price, and whoever procures it at the expense of ten thousand desires makes a wise and happy purchase.

Repentance without amendment is like continual pumping in a ship without stopping the leaks.

The World's Happenings.

London has 444 burying grounds.

Electricity is now applied to blacking shoes.

There are forty-three log school houses in Iowa.

Florida strawberries are "5 cents apiece" in New York.

Chicago tailors call a fat man's coat a "Frederick."

Milton, Fla., has a new weekly paper called "Walker's Buzz Saw."

A Michigan bookseller is doing well by loaning books at a cent a day.

Arabs believe that washing the face is simply an indirect form of suicide.

Snowdrifts overtop the telegraph poles along some railway lines in Dakota.

The Japanese hitch their horses in the street by tying their forelegs together.

The State of Sonora, Mexico, levies a tax of $2 on every baby born within its limits.

The piano is now being used in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, in the Sunday service.

One of the best amateur boxers in Maine is said to the pastor of a leading Congregational church.

In Jefferson county, N. Y., they have been baptizing converts in a pond with the mercury 15° below zero.

It takes every year 1,000,000 horses' tails to keep a Pawtucket, R. I., hair-cloth factory in running order.

A hen that crows and "struts about as though she were the cock of the walk," is said to be a Connecticut reality.

The bite of a rat on her face led to blood poisoning and caused the death of Mrs. Lucy M. Carleton, of Nashua, Mass.

After 13 years litigation, an Albany estate has realized 85 cents apiece for the heirs. The lawyers got about $11,000 each.

A Jackson, Miss., man died not long ago, and his wife has written a letter to him every day and placed it on his grave.

A fashionable and exclusive club in New York is called the Irish Club, the name arising from the fact that no Irishmen can join.

A New York laundry, located near a church, bears the appropriate legend on its sign board: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness."

It is a growing custom in Germany to place Christmas trees on the graves of children. On many of them are burning tapers and rich decorations.

The Pope's foot is incased in a silk stocking, which is again incased in a dainty slipper embroidered with a cross, which the pilgrim touches with his lips.

Mrs. John Guest, of Wichita, Kan., has well employed her 20 years of married life, for she has born 22 children, twice giving birth to twins and once to triplets.

Baroness Burdett-Coutts is about to establish workshops in London equipped with sewing machines, where poor seamstresses can go and use them at a low charge.

In front of the postoffice of Versailles, Mo., there is a placard on which is the following announcement: Stamps, 2 cents; stamps licked, 3 cents; stamps licked and stuck, 4 cents.

Dr. Merriman, of North Adams, is riding this winter in a sleigh that is 225 years old. It was made in 1663 for his great-great-grandfather, and has been in the family ever since.

A New England church fair had as its prime attraction two side shows, in one of which 2 young women were seen sawing wood, and in the other two young men piecing patchwork.

Fort Keogh, in Montana, must be a nice sort of a place to live. Last summer the mercury went up to 120 degrees above zero, and a few days ago the thermometer registered 61° below zero.

A conscience-smitten Fitchburg (Mass.) man has sent to Secretary Fairchild 25 cents in restitution for a 5-cent stamp of which he robbed the Government by cancellation thirty years ago.

A Kansas paper tells of a man in Rocks county, that state, who has been arrested for stealing a school house. He had removed the building to his own residence and converted it into a kitchen.

An Atlanta girl, who eloped on Saturday and got married, comes of a family noted for runaway marriages. She has four sisters, and three of them, at different times before her, ran off to wed.

A school teacher at Ferry, Mich., beat a scholar with a club, and then paraded around the room with a revolver to keep the big boys under subjection. The Courts are to investigate his conduct.

Wm. Wilkens, a seaman on New York pilot boat No. 13, was recently killed by locomotive No. 13 of the Staten Island Rapid Transit Railroad. He is said to be the sixth person whom the locomotive has killed.

Passengers on the elevated roads in New York are now provided with reading matter while awaiting at the stations for trains. Novels have been placed there by the publishers, who took the precaution to attach a chain that they might not be carried off.

From New Lisbon, Ohio, comes the story that a man there who, less than a month ago, was divorced from his wife, has relented and again married her. She is in the last stages of consumption, and, according to accounts, was greatly comforted at being remarried.

The point where the coldest temperature on earth has ever been observed has been dignified by the name of the pole of cold. It is located to the East of the River Lena in Siberia. There, at Verchojansk, the Russian government has established an observatory. The poor weatherman out there reported in December, one year, 61° below zero, and January, 1885, as much as 93° below.

ROSES AND THORNS.

BY G. BUTT.

How sweet the scent of roses was,
How soft the summer air;
The breath of June, like incense, seemed
To touch us unaware.

I held the branches as you passed,
That swung against your knee!
The roses only touched your cheek,
The thorns were all for me!

Thus June will come and sweetly go,
And roses bloom and fade,
Leaving their petals on the grass
When all the debt is paid!

You have forgotten all our dreams—
So best! so let it be!
I will not grudge the rose to you
Who left the thorns for me!

Where Shadows Fall.

BY A. J. MCALILLY.

IT has been the hope of my life! I have studied early and late, that I might the sooner complete my education. I have avoided society and all appearances of gayety, that I might not forget the solemn obligation that lies upon me. I have carefully hoarded up my allowance of money from childhood, that I might have the more to spend upon my life work. In fact I have lived, with but one object in view, and I shall never rest until my work is accomplished. Beyond that I have never thought—that is, never until I met you my darling, and now that I have your love to cheer me on, and the promise of your sweet self, in the future, when my task is done—what more can I ask of fate? What sweeter recompense for my shadowed life?"

Slowly up and down the gravel path they walked, the stalwart man, and fragile girl.

The tall silver-leaved poplars, on either side of the pathway, stirred their white leaves tenderly to and fro. The fountain, in the midst of the grass plot on the right, splashed softly, and the arbor, covered with its mantle of white roses, arose like a monument on the left, and the whispering leaves seemed bidding a sad farewell to the waxen petals of the over-ripe blooms, as they yielded up their perfume, and beneath the weight of the evening dew, fell fluttering to the ground.

And over all the beautiful moonlight spread a silvery sheen—upon the agitated face of the man, as he ceased speaking and lifted his hat, to brush the heavy dark hair from his forehead—and around the slender white robed form at his side, it seemed to linger lovingly—caressing the golden hair, half hidden with the lace scarf, and making a blaze of the diamond that gleamed on one of the white hands clasping the arm of her lover.

They had stopped at last and he with his face upturned was gazing steadfastly at the starry heavens, trying to pierce the future, and reasoning with a man's blind faith in the "why" and "wherefore"—that since all things must end, surely the shadows that had darkened the morning of his life, must pass away and leave a glorious afternoon—a rose tinted evening. But the face of the girl at his side, was upturned to his own, and the infinite faith of a woman's unquestioning love, shone from her eyes, which looked not beyond the shrine of her heart's idol, for the fulfillment of love's promises.

Suddenly unnoticed by either, a tiny cloud loomed up and in a moment obscured the moon—the two faces were darkened and of one accord the two watchers resumed their walk.

The girl withdrew her hand from the arm of her companion, and trembling as with a new born fear, she gradually fell behind her lover, who seemed for the moment oblivious of his surroundings—he paused suddenly and turning quickly, came back to her and tenderly clasping her in his arms exclaimed:

"Forgive me darling; why, you are trembling? How selfish of me to bore you with the dismal story of my life. There, kiss me love, and forget it. We will be happy while we may."

"Ah! Larry I can't forget; I feel as if the shadow of your is creeping over mine, too."

"Nonsense, Star, my task may end very soon, and when it does we will bury the past and begin life anew."

"But it is such a hopeless task. It happened so long ago. Let me see, you was three years old when your——when it was done, and now you are twenty-three—twenty years ago! And only one little clew to aid you. O! Larry, surely you can see how very hopeless it is?"

"I have thought of all that, a hundred times, but it is only a year since I began my search, and I am not yet discouraged. I did not expect to succeed at once—you cannot understand what it was to have a father and mother murdered in cold——"

"Your mother, Larry?"

"Well, it amounts to the same thing. She died a few weeks after my father's murder, of a broken heart."

"But your life? Was it nothing, that your aunt should blacken every day's sunshine with a rehearsal of your wrongs, and instill into it a desire for vengeance until the very air you breathe is tainted with fierce longing for blood—for human blood?"

"Star!"

"Is it not so? Perhaps after all he is dead; or if he lives, think what a life is his—hunted by the law, and haunted by the remorse of a guilty conscience."

"But why should I show him mercy. He had no mercy on my father. Think, Star, my poor father sitting by his study-table reading, and a stranger steps in at the open window, (he must have come in that way, or else some one had seen him.) As I was saying he steps in at the window, springs upon my father and stabs him through the heart. My poor father makes a frantic clutch in his death struggle, and tears a portion of a leaf from a book which the stranger has. It must have been a book which he had with him, because when my father was found, hours afterward, the piece of paper was still in his hand, but no book was ever found to which it could possibly belong."

"Surely, Larry, there must have been a motive for the deed. Was nothing, missing? And had your father no enemies?"

"No, nothing was taken. My father had a large sum of money on his person. Also a valuable watch, and other jewelry, but they were undisturbed. And so far as was known, he had not an enemy in the world."

"Forgive me, Larry, but I cannot help thinking that it would have been better, far better, if you had been allowed to forget that terrible time, and grow up a happy thoughtless boy, enjoying the hours as they went by, for I fear where experienced detectives have failed, you will not succeed, and beside, O, Larry, I fear for our future happiness, if it depends upon the certainty of your success."

"Well, dear, we will make a bargain. Your father says I cannot have you until you are twenty, that will be two years hence—if up to that time I have not found the scoundrel, I will give up the search and never mention it again. You are very dear to me darling; I would not like to make you unhappy for a moment."

"Thank you Larry, you are very, very good to me, but let us go in now for—you will think me foolish—I feel as though there was a heavy shadow hovering over me, and coming down, down—"

"From where, Star? Look how lovely everything is in the beautiful moonlight. Yes, we will go in, and you shall sing the bugbear away."

* * * * * *

It is morning and beneath the bright June sunshine, the poplars show only the glossy green of their leaves, the dew is rapidly drying on the tender grass, and the arbor does not look so ghostly as it did last night, birds are singing merrily, and the fountain glitters and sparkles, but fairest of all is the sweet face of Star Wayne and her low voice and happy laugh, are like rare music to her invalid father, whom she is wheeling up and down the walk in his chair.

Suddenly the young face flushes, she has espied her lover in the distance, and bending over her father she whispers, "Larry is coming, papa, I will run and speak to him, and then come back to you." And away she skips.

"You are ahead of time, you naughty fellow; a whole half hour ahead!"

"Well so I am, but time drags so when I am away from you."

"Ah! that comes of idleness; but I must run back to papa, I can't cheat him out of his airing, you know; you wont mind waiting in the library a little while, Larry?"

"O no! if I can't stay here with you. Impossible! so I am gone; I'll come to you in a half hour."

Slowly Larry Barlow goes up the broad steps, and into the cool hall; he pauses a moment in the doorway, and looks backward down the shady walk; he notes the graceful form, the fluttering dress, and the gleam of golden hair, as the sunlight falls upon it. As though conscious of his gaze, Star turns and lifting her finger tips to her lips, throws a kiss, and he with a gallant bow returns the salute, and then passes on to the library.

He has been in this room many times, and availed himself of Mr. Wayne's permission to use such books as he chose and he goes now and mechanically opens one of the glass doors, and reaching up takes down a book; he knows not what, cares not. He is unconscious of what he is doing; he is thinking of what Star said last night, and wondering if after all he had not missed in his unloved and unloving childhood and youth, something for which even a happy future could not completely atone: the sweet spring flowers of happiness, that bloom only in the maytime of life.

His eyes are upon the book, he is turning leaf after leaf, but he sees them not until suddenly he draws in a quick, deep breath.

What is this before him? Only the torn page of the herbarium, and yet it holds the fate of more lives than one. Only the torn page of a book he has never seen before; the upper portion of a fern still clings to it; part of a capital letter and after it the whole of the letter W, part of a date, the last two figures of which are 56. He knows his search is ended; he takes from his note book a piece of paper; it completes the torn page, the stem of the fern fits exactly to the upper part; the initials F. W. stand out plainly; the date is complete, as is also the Latin name of the fern; and still he gazes, his face white with a stony horror.

He hears not when Star glides into the room and creeps up behind him, her face beaming with mischief, as she peers over his shoulder to see what so absorbs him. She sees the piece of paper he is holding in place so carefully, she sees the terrors on his face, and there flashes over her memory the time when quite a child she had come across that book and asked her father some question about it, and he had taken the book from her and murmuring something about the "dead" had sent her from the room.

Her eye caught the initials now F. W., and her stiff white lips framed the words "Frank Wayne" as sank foward and with a despairing moan, went off into a death-like swoon.

And Larry startled and bewildered for a moment, realized at last how terrible was this unlooked for success of his lifework. He lifted the unconscious girl in his arms, and held her a moment, kissing her coldly, and murmuring incoherently, then laying her on the couch, he carefully replaced the fatal book on the shelf, and called a servant saying that Miss Wayne was ill, and then he left the house.

He stopped on the veranda and looked at the old man asleep in his chair. The poor sightless eyes were closed; the thin locks of white hair lay softly on the sunken temples; very careworn was the pale face, but a peaceful smile hovered around the withered lips.

And this was his father's murderer. Many times had he thought what he would say, when he came face to face with the wretch,—but not thus had he expected to find him; not this blind, helpless, old man whom he had learned to love—the father of his darling.

O God why must an evil deed leave so dark a trail behind? "God forgive me," he said, "but for aught that I shall do my father's murder must remain unavenged." And he passed down the walk and the birds sang, the fountain splashed and the roses nodded in the soft breeze, but to Larry Barlow had come the bitterness of death.

His work was finished, his dream of happiness was over, and the next train bore him away from the place whither fate had led him.

There was no need to see Star again, he knew by that one agonized moan that she understood that between them was blood—a father's blood—no word need be spoken—the shadow had fallen and love and joy were over for aye, back to his childhood's home went the broken hearted man; how silent the deserted house; how grim the face of the old servant who unbolts the door; how ghastly the gloom within even in his agonizing sorrow—the stricken man feels a deeper pang, as he wanders from room to room, until at last he enters the room where his father breathed his last, and throws himself into the very chair where his father's fate came upon him, wishing alas! that death might come to him also.

The table is at his elbow and upon it there lies a package. He reads the address:

"To my dear son Larry Barlow—From his loving mother—To be delivered to him on his twenty-first birthday."

Ah! here was a message from the dead, which he should have received two years ago, but what matters it, nothing can matter much now that life is over for him. But at last he opens the letter so faded, so feebly written, and reads, not because he has any curiosity as to the contents—not from love of the parent whom he scarcely remembers, but from the desire to forget even for a moment his misery.

My Dear Son:—I am dying, and I shall have been dead many years, when this reaches you.

O my son! forgive, forgive your poor, weak mother, for the sin of not confessing to the world, what she now confesses to you.

They say I am dying from grief of your dear father's death; but, my son, grief alone seldom kills, and I am dying beneath the burden of the guilty secret which I am hiding. The night after your father's murder my brother, my dearly loved younger brother, Larry, for whom you are named, came to me and told me, that he had killed your father.

Angry words had passed between them, and in a fit of ungovernable temper the deed was done.

O! my son, much as I loved your dear father, I could not see my brother perish on the gallows, and I gave him money to flee the country. But no one ever so much as suspected him. He is gone, I know not where.

The paper, which is supposed to be a clew, was torn from the book of a friend of your father's, who visited us a year ago, and has been among your father's papers ever since. How it came to be in his hand at that terrible time I know not. And now, my dear son, I beg mercy for—

And here we leave the message from the dead, as Larry did. There were many closely written pages, but too long had they been delayed, and enough had been read to cause love and hope to revive and throb; and as fast as steam could take him, back to his lost darling he flies.

At last he reaches the gate, but what is this winding down the pathway? A sombre procession, his heart is in his mouth almost, as he stands aside; but a servant whispers to him, "It is the old man sir, found dead in his chair on the veranda the very day you left. We would have sent you word, sir, but Miss Star is that crazy, that we couldn't find out your address. Poor young lady, she has never seemed right since you left. She sits all day wringing her hands and talking of shadows; but now you are come, sir, she will be better sure."

* * * * * *

Ten years have rolled away. It is another night in June, and up and down the path two forms are walking.

The trees on either side the path are larger now. The silver lined leaves are thicker, but the fountain on the right splashes as softly as of old; the arbor on the left is whiter perhaps, and the waxen petals of the roses are falling faster in the evening dew, and all the leaves are whispering very sadly. But the two in the walk are passing up and down, to and fro; and he with his face upturned to heaven is wondering if it be a just God who smites the innocent with the heavy hand of affliction, and crushes the weak beneath the unmerited burden of the guilt of others; but she at his side with her vacant face, and dull eyes, from which reason will never gleam again, asks in her plaintive childlike voice: "The shadows, Larry, are they falling." And over all the moonlight lies like a shroud.

MEN BEFORE.—Everybody has read of Benjamin Franklin, and how he rose to distinction amid privation and toil. But there is one anecdote which I have never seen in print. It was told me by a gentleman in Boston, who remembered the old house in which Franklin was born.

"Often," said he, "have I looked at the old, tumbled-down building on Milk street, and imagined the barefooted boy sitting on the door-step learning to spell from an old posthill."

A young miss, daughter of a distinguished citizen, passed him one day while thus engaged, and the boy overheard her words of ridicule as she spoke to her companion, laughing at the eagerness of the poor lad, and deriding his "beautiful spelling-book." But there came another day when Franklin was our ambassador at the Court of France.

A wealthy American lady, who was present at one of the festive occasions made in honor of Franklin, greatly desired an introduction to her distinguished countryman. It was obtained, and great was her surprise to hear him say, "Aye, aye, we have met before."

She could not remember when, and Franklin added, "You do not remember the barefooted little boy on Milk street, studying his lesson from the muddy post bill!"

A Midnight Walk.

BY RICHARD DOWLING.

THERE could no longer be any doubt of it: I had lost my way. It was past midnight, late in September, when I set out from Worthing to walk to my lodgings in the Crescent, Littlehampton.

The night was pitch dark. I had been upwards of an hour on the way home, and I now had no more notion of my whereabouts than if I had that moment alighted from the moon for the first time.

That afternoon I had gone by train from Littlehampton to Worthing, spent the evening and dined with my old friend Stapleton, determined to come back along the sands; for I thought a solitary walk by the margin of the sea in the cool of night would give me an admirable opportunity of building castles in the air for the housing of my sweetheart Alice.

She had gone to London for the day, and Littlehampton without her was not to be endured. Staple and I sat chatting over old days, taking no heed of time, while the tide kept creeping in, taking no more heed of us than it did of Canute, until no dry sand remained for my belated feet; and, since walk I would, nothing remained for it but to adopt the intricate and tortuous pathway through the fields.

I had trod this route once in daylight, and felt confident I should be able to follow it in the dark.

No light of star or moon shone upon the solitude. The air was heavy, damp, oppressive. I would have found companionship in the bark of a dog, but the silence of complete sleep was upon the fields. No rays from towns or villages or solitary abode of man pierced the walls of darkness.

Clouds must have been overhead, if space had not swallowed the luminaries of night's aerial depths; beyond what my feet touched must have lain land, if the abysses had not engulfed the fields: in both cases the evidence of my sense of sight was lacking.

I knew that round me was warm air, and beneath me solid earth, covered with growth of some kind; but this was all I knew for certain. Now and then some subtle sense of touch or smell hinted that I was near a hedge, or tree, or wall.

I must wait for light before I durst hope to find my way out of that field. By no means could I determine in what direction a path or stile lay. The best thing to do was to remain still.

What growth covered the ground? I stooped and felt round my feet. Sharp, wet stubble met my naked hand. I lay down at full length, and rested on my elbow.

I struck a match and looked at my watch. It wanted twenty minutes of one o'clock—more than four hours of dawn. I lit a cigar, and, banishing the circumstances of my position as much as I could from my mind, abandoned myself to thoughts of the coming day.

I was young, in good health, and in a satisfactory position as far as worldly gear was concerned.

A week ago I had come to Littlehampton for a holiday and to be near some one who was infinitely dear to me. This was my first visit to the neighborhood, and I had conned it but indifferently.

My eyes and ears had been for Alice chiefly. All the sights around me had been only a frame to the picture in which she appeared; all the sounds but the melody to which she moved.

This morning she had gone up to London. She was not to return until a late hour, and I had paid a visit to my old college friend, Stapleton, partly for the pleasure of shaking his hand again, and partly with a view to killing time during the hours she and I should be separated.

After breakfast to-morrow—no, not to-morrow, this very day—we were to go to Arundel Castle. We had arranged to row up the river and come back by train.

As I lay and smoked I conjured up our meeting in the blythe sweet morning. I saw her smile as she gave me her hand.

I heard her soft, rich voice as she told me with joyous grace the history of her little trip to London, where our home was to be by-and-by.

With jealous and tender care I helped her in spirit into the boat. I watched her seated opposite me as she laughed over my account of this night's adventure.

I saw her golden hair blown by the fancy wind across her white forehead, her rosy cheek, to be brushed slowly back by her slender hand.

I watched the fruit-like freshness of her parted lips, the milky warmth of her rounded throat above the snowy collar, the dreamy contentment of her drooped lashes, the faint azure of her dainty gown, the rich bronze shadows under her hat upon her amber hair above the attentive ear.

I felt the oars in my hands, and youth in my veins, and strength in my muscles. I felt invincible, immortal, while I looked at her.

I was king of the whole green earth, and she was queen. I was heir to the sapphire empyrean, and she should be my consort in the days of my inheritance.

Under the magic of my dream, the unpleasantness of my situation disappeared until my cigar was finished.

As I threw the end of it away, my vision passed. I sat up and looked about.

Huge, dark masses of trees like gigantic funeral plumes loomed around me. I turned my eyes upward.

The impenetrable blackness of an hour ago had given place to dim, blue starlight seen through sable diaphonous cloud. I rose and gazed attentively into the vaporous gloom.

The upper line of the hedge and the outline of the trees were bluntly, indistinctly traced against the lesser dark of the heavens. Looking down, I could see the ground at my feet, though not clearly. It might be rock, or road, or grass, or stubble, or water, for all account of it my eyes gave me.

I was tired and chilled and resolved to move, although every step grew me farther from my goal. I felt stiff and physically wretched.

I longed for violent exercise of any kind. I could not hope to find a path until the light grew stronger, but I might be able to discover a gate or stile. I stepped out briskly towards the hedge nearest to me and reached it in a few moments.

It was thickset, impenetrable. I judged my way to lie on the right, but could not be sure.

As far as I could make out, I had never been in this field, or within sight of it, before. Not a sound broke the silence.

Skirting the hedge and keeping my head low so as to throw up the line of the hedge as high as possible against the sky and so disclose any depression indicating a gate or stile, I walked along another side of the field.

Here, to my satisfaction, I found a gate. In my present condition one field was as good as another, and yet I felt a sense of triumph in my discovery.

In climbing over that gate and gaining the other side, I seemed to have achieved progress.

Stooping down in this new field, I felt at my feet grass. I looked around.

As well as I could make out, the trees here were in clusters, not forming a parallelogram as before. In front of me seemed the greatest uninterrupted space. All ways were alike to me so long as I might move quickly.

I set off at a brisk pace keeping my eyes fixed ahead lest I should run against some object. I had gone no more than a hundred yards when upon thrusting my right foot foremost, it touched nothing. I shot forward and downward with the speed of lightning; the field and trees rushed out of my view; I felt a violent shock and became unconscious.

When my senses returned, the first thing I noticed was that I could not move easily. I was reclining on my left side, with my left arm under me and my left leg doubled up, so that I was sitting on my left foot. When I looked up, I saw a long broad straight path of dim light; the sky in which the watery stars lay sutlled, deep-sunken. This region of light wavered before my eyes to and fro, like the sky seen through the companion of a rolling ship. On each side of this path of light was complete darkness.

I felt giddy, sick, and, notwithstanding that I was lying down, as if I should fall. I did not at once recall the circumstances immediately preceding my accident. In order to shut out the rocking sky and steady my head and enable me to think, I dropped my lids.

When doing so I became conscious of a tightness and stiffness of my left cheek. With an effort I released my left arm and felt my face with my hand.

The cheek was tender to the touch and covered with clay or slime.

This discovery helped the return of memory. I now recollected that I had been walking by night and had fallen. My head must have struck against something and I had been stunned and was hurt. Yes, I must have fallen and into a ditch too, or pool or pond, for here was water, stagnant water, up to my waist as I crouched against the bank.

If my head was only steady enough, I had better scramble out of this cold slimy cleft and move on.

Opening my eyes, I looked up to find the stars rocking slightly to and fro still, but my head quite steady enough to warrant me in trying to get out of this ditch and find the way home.

By the aid of my hands and right leg I raised myself into an upright position. The left leg felt useless, numbed, asleep. In a few minutes it would be all right and I on my way to town.

I drew the leg under me and leaned on it. Instantly it gave way. It had been asleep. It was broken!

What a horrible ending to my pleasant day with Stapleton! What a grim preparation for my expedition with Alice up the Arun to-morrow!

Here was I with a broken leg and clothes soaked through, unable to move, at the bottom of a ditch in the dense darkness of September night, and in a district of which I knew little or nothing!

When should I be rescued? The ditch was deeper than I was tall; I could not reach the top with my hands.

It would be utterly impossible for me to drag myself up out of this place. Here I must stay until some one chanced to pass by and find me.

I had strayed miles from my way and must now be somewhere between Arundel and Littlehampton. Such ditches I knew existed between these two towns, but I had neither seen nor heard of any such between Worthing and Littlehampton. Here I struck another match and looked at my watch.

Half-past two. Half-past two and no chance of relief until daylight! Was it possible for a man with a broken leg to live four hours standing in eighteen inches of water?

What assurance had I that with dawn aid would be at hand? It would be horrible that one so young and full of life and pleasant anticipations should perish so near succor, within a few thousand yards of his sweetheart and his home.

I leant against the sloping side of the cutting allowing the broken limb to hang from the hip. I can scarcely say I was in physical pain, but my mental misery was extreme.

I could no more climb the bank than help myself to the stars. It would be idle to hope I could escape from the fall, the hurt, and the wetting without fever. In that fever should I die?

Should my senses close upon the bright world for ever? Should I never see Alice with undistempered eyes?

When I was dead and cold, lying in a pit as deep as this one, would my darling forget me? Would she after a while dry her eyes and smile and clasp another hand, listen to the whispered words of some new lover?

Or would she grow old in single sorrow until she was withered and bent? Would she go down into the grave with nothing on her wedding finger but the ring I had given her when she promised me her hand for ever?

Would she have no lover but me? Would she die a withered maid? My blooming Alice a bowed shrivelled old maid of whom young girls would talk with contemptuous pity and young men would laugh at!

I could not bear the picture of my darling's dereliction; it would break my heart. To banish it and find relief for my feelings, I threw my arms high above me and shouted out in an agony of despair.

The volume and intensity of the sound startled and astonished me. Some peculiarity in the substance or conformation of the ditch increased the intensity of the voice.

The cry rolled up and down among echoes sharp and hollow filling the cleft with uproar.

As the last reverberation died away, another sound arose close to where I stood. The water was stagnant at my feet, yet now I heard the sound of moving in the water. Could it be I had awakened some sleeping beast?

Might it be an otter or a water-rat, or—I trembled—a snake? Were there not snakes, adders in Sussex? Was a sly, smooth, loathsome, deadly adder wriggling towards me?

I shuddered and drew myself together.

The noise increased. It now became a regular swish-swash, with a gurgle at the end of the double round.

Clearly no snake. No reptile in England was large enough to make so loud a noise in moving.

All at once my heart stood still with horror. Something was breathing heavily, close to my ear!

Something touched my shoulder! I cried aloud, half in terror, half to frighten away the unknown thing.

Instantly all was still as a grave. Whatever had come in contact with me drew away into the darkness and touched me no longer. I drew a deep breath and shivered. My leg gave me a sudden pang and I moaned with pain.

"Who are you? What do you want here?" asked a gruff surly voice close to my cheek.

"Thank God!" I cried; "you are a man! I have fallen into this ditch and broken my leg. It was Heaven sent you here to me. Let me feel your hand."

I thrust out my arm and touched a figure, a coat. In my relief I seized the coat eagerly.

A hand clutched my arm, and my arm was flung violently away by it.

"Keep quiet or it will be worse for you! What brought you here?"

"I was walking from Worthing to Littlehampton and lost my way in the dark and fell into the ditch."

"You lie, governor. It won't do. Gammon's no use. You'd better act square and own up. This place is not between Worthing and Littlehampton."

"Own up to what? I told you I lost my way. I don't know where I am. I swear I am telling you the truth. I shall die here if you don't help me or get me help."

"Maybe you'll die here. Maybe so. Lots of people tumble into these ditches and go home feet foremost. Oh, lots of people."

I turned sick and faint at the lie and the jeering tone and with pain.

"Come now," the voice of the man said in accents of coarse banter, "you wanted to see me. You came to visit me, you know. To make a friendly call, don't you see. Where are your pals? Where are the other coppers? Why don't they lend you a hand, eh, governor? But perhaps you thought to do the job yourself, single-handed, and get promotion and a present of a nice five-pound note, eh? Your pals oughtn't to leave you here in an open grave to die, that is if you have any pals. It isn't friendly of them, you know."

The danger of death in the ditch had been hideously increased by the arrival of this creature, this invisible outlaw of some kind.

I made an effort to speak forcibly and calmly.

"You seem to think I have something to do with the police. I swear to you I have not. My name is Edward Congreve; I lodge at Mrs. Brown's in the Crescent, Littlehampton. If you get me out of this and back to the town, I will give you three pounds I have in my pocket and my watch, and ten pounds more at my lodgings. If you strike a light, you can see by my letters that I have told you my right name and address, and that I am no policeman. I'll show you the letters." I attempted to strike a light. The match was damp and failed.

"Stop!" he hissed fiercely. He seized me by the hands whose position had been indicated by the phosphoric streak on the matchbox; "if you do that I'll throttle you!"

He dropped my hands and clutched me by the throat. My head swam. A fiery twinge of pain shot upward through my body, and for the second time I became insensible.

Upon the opening of my eyes I returned to full consciousness and full apprehension of the past and present. I remembered all that had happened to me in the ditch and I looked around me with eager curiosity.

I found myself lying on my back in a small low chamber illumined by a dim, ruddy light like that from glowing metal. The chamber was narrow for its width, about twenty feet by ten. It was no more than six feet high, the roof being formed of rough boards supported by three upright posts. The walls were of unplastered clay.

The air was full of a strong sulphurous vapor and my mouth and throat felt parched. My leg pained me and throbbed violently.

My head felt as though a tight inflexible band pressed heavily on my brow. After a few moments I came to the conclusion that the peculiar odor did not proceed from sulphur but from burning charcoal or coke, the fumes of which would produce the sensation in my head and the dryness of my throat and mouth.

The boarded roof, the wooden uprights, and the clay walls puzzled me for a while. In the end it seemed plain. The chamber was a cave or grotto hollowed out of the earth, and the boards and uprights were to keep the roof from falling in.

At length I heard a voice, the voice which had spoken to me in the ditch, now speaking in a hoarse whisper.

"There's only two thick ones and fifteen bob, and the ticker, and he said he had three pieces. There's five bob out of our pocket any way. Five bob gone, sink or swim."

"I say sink," said the voice of a woman in reply.

"It isn't good enough money for that, unless he does the trick of his own free will. What would be the good? We'd make nothing out of that, and he promised a tenner more if I got him to the town."

"Ay," she sneered viciously, "and if we get him to the town where will he get us? eh, Bill? Bill, my man, you're off your nut a bit. Why, if we brought him to the town we'd be doing time before Christmas. No. I say, why not let them find him lying on his face in the drain?"

"But then this lay would be blown on. I'm not going to carry him a couple of miles from this and heave him in the ditch. If I did they'd be after his money and ticker. If they found him here they'd find this place too, and his money and watch gone."

The woman did not speak at once. I grew cold all over. My great fear was that I should faint again.

If I did I believed my doom would be sealed. I have not reported the dialogue word for word, because many of the expressions used were too atrocious for reproduction, and the most of them would be unintelligible to anyone not familiar with the subtleties of thieves' slang.

At length the woman's voice reached my ears.

"The place is blown on now, any way. We'll have to hook it. If we carry him home he's bound to peach. He must be made to pay for our loss of time in finding some other lay.

"It's a good job the duffers were all run before this cursed fool turned up. When you were out I ran the rest of the pewter into the moulds, and buried all under the brazier.

"Ten quid he said he'd give. That's not enough for the job, letting alone the risk. He'd round on us as soon as he came within a bawl of anyone else.

"Let us take our traps and the swag, and leave him here. He won't be found for a while, and we can make tracks to some place where the coppers can't find us, even if he lives and peaches, and if he doesn't live it's no business of ours. I say take the bird in the hand and leave the birds in the bush alone. If we try to get that tenner we're sure to be lagged."

The man in his turn paused.

The voices of the speakers came from behind my head. I looked around me without moving anything but my eyes.

They would surely kill me if they knew I had overheard their conversation. There was nothing between my aching body and the earthen floor but a coarse mat.

No furniture of any kind could be seen. My head being towards the two speakers I did not command a view of them or the brazier.

It was plain from what the woman had said in her longest speech that the two were coiners, and that my cry in the ditch had interrupted them when they were running the metal into moulds. The man had, no doubt, sallied forth to see what was wrong. The want of furniture showed that they did not use the grotto as a dwelling.

I had estimated the size of it by the roof, all of which was visible to me as I lay looking up. Little more room could be behind me than would suffice for two people and the fire.

The pain of my leg was now very great, and my mouth and throat were burning. I no longer was in fear of fainting. My dread was that I should involuntarily cry out or cough, and betray my consciousness or attract attention.

I said to myself I would give a year of my life for a glass of the stagnant water of that ditch.

A year of my life! Why, I might at that moment have no more minutes to live than the fingers on my right hand!

After what seemed an hour the man spoke: "I tell you, Bess, I mean to have a try for that tenner. You don't think I'm such a flat as to take the bloke body and bones on my shoulder to the town? Not likely! I wasn't born yesterday, nor yet the day before. Let him be and let me be, and if I don't pull off that tenner may I dance at my own funeral."

"But can we handle the tenner and get away from this safe?"

"Ayg safe, and with greased heels and no trail."

"What will you do?"

"Bess, that's my own affair. Leave it to me. I say leave it to me; and if I don't pull it off you may put a rope round my neck and sell me for a fool."

"Take care you are not putting the rope round your neck yourself in this job."

"Benanged to you, I say!" he shouted savagely. "Hold your row, or I'll do the hornpipe on the tight-rope for you." In his rage he had forgotten my presence, and towards the end of his speech raised his voice to a shriek.

I made up my mind instantly that I would exploit the man's loud voice against me.

"Who's there? Come in," I cried in as loud a tone as I could muster. On my success now depended my life.

I heard a noise from behind, and saw a woman stand up at my side. "Who knocked? Did not some one knock? Who are you? I don't know you. Where am I?"

The woman bent over me and peered into my face. She was of the gipsy type, young, not more than three or four and twenty.

She was thin and brown and high-colored, with a pointed chin and slightly hooked nose. Her eyes were dark, cold, glittering, cruel. Her raven black hair was drawn back from her forehead under a brown straw bonnet, in which burned a crimson feather amid peacock-blue ribbons. The expression of her face was fierce, unrelenting. Great though my extremity, I could not help thinking of the gentle, dainty, maiden freshness of my darling, as I looked at the sharp, bold, brazen, heartless, wicked face of this young woman.

"Ah, you're awake!" she said, bending low and fixing her eyes threateningly on me. "Don't you know where you are? Why this is Ostorne Lane, and they hangs a lord of you for breaking your back, and you're going to marry Queen Victoria to-morrow. That's the sort of man you are. Don't you know where you are now, and who I am?"

"I do not know where I am, or who you are. I am in great pain. Will you be so good as to give me a drink of water?"

The man now stepped forward with a tin mug in his hand. He was a tall, powerful, flat-chested, swarthy, handsome man, with large, black, restless eyes, and long, slender, treacherous-looking hands. He held out the tin to me in silence.

I took the mug, raised it to my lips, and handed it back untasted.

"I thank you. Can you not give me plain water?"

"Ough!" cried the woman in scornful wrath, "get him port wine or champagne! Gin isn't good enough for his lordship. Would you like champagne mulled and with cloves in it? Turns up his nose at gin! Maybe he thinks Bill is the Duke and I am the Duchess, and this is Arundel Castle! Why, he couldn't be more of a lord if his back wasn't broken and he owned all the land from this spot to the New Forest!"

"Hold your row, Bess; hold your row, and let me talk to the gentleman," in a tone of authoritative plausibility. "Fetch a mug of water. Gin would be bad for the gentleman's leg although it would keep the cold out of his bones."

The woman laughed angrily, brought another tin mug, and to my inexpressible relief and delight, I swallowed the cool sweet water at a draught. The man then motioned the woman to retire, and she withdrew to the upper end of the cave out of my sight.

"I hope you feel better, sir?" said the man, squatting down at my feet.

"Yes, thank you." He had spoken in a tone of concern. It was plain he intended to begin treating about the ten-pound note. I began to breathe more freely. No doubt he was a lawless scoundrel, but it was better to have to deal with him than with the woman.

"Your leg is broken, sir," he said quietly, "and you are helpless. You fainted in the ditch where I found you, and Bess and myself carried you in here. You said I was to have ten pounds and your watch and chain and loose money for the job. You said you had three pounds, and all you have is two pounds fifteen; and these are cruel hard times on poor honest folk like us. But I won't be hard on you, sir. There, I'll take the two fifteen in place of the three quid you so kindly promised! Do you stand by what you said about the tenner?"

"Certainly. You are welcome to my watch and money, and I'll give you the ten pounds when you get me to my lodgings."

He scratched his head and turned his eyes up with an expression of perplexity. "Well, sir, I'd be glad to do anything I could for you," he said, turning his eyes to the ground. "But these are bad times, and I owe a little money in Littlehampton, and I can't go into the town without getting my feelings hurt, and that is why you see me where I am. My poor wife, sir, would not think of letting me go into the town with you in open daylight. But I might be able to slip in on the sly after dark and hand a note to anyone who would pay the money and come for you."

There was no use higgling with this man. Of course he could take the ten pounds and adopt no steps for my return or put my friends on the wrong scent; but it would be fatal weakness to admit doubt of his good faith.

"Very well," I said. "I suppose it will soon be daylight. I will write a note, and you shall go and fetch the money and leave word with Mrs. Brown to send a cart or carriage for me."

"It is broad daylight already, past nine o'clock."

I looked towards the end of the cavern and now noticed, for the first time, that it was crossed by a heavy dark cloth. Afterwards I learned that the mouth of the cave was concealed by brambles and ferns.

The land here was little good even for grazing, and the cattle were always taken off at the beginning of September. It was seldom visited by anyone after the cows were removed. Hence, no doubt, my gipsy host had selected this ditch and dug his grotto into the side of it for the purposes of his occult art.

"Broad day!" I thought with a shock. "Past nine o'clock! What will my Alice think?"

I was now in the utmost haste to send a message of some kind to the town. She might think me dead! I took an envelope off a letter and hastily wrote on the inside of it a request to Mrs. Brown to open my portmanteau, take ten pounds out of my pocket-book and give them to the bearer. Here I paused a moment. The light was very bad. My host bent towards me and read what I had written.

"Sign that now," said he, holding out his hand.

"Yes, but how about the carriage for me? Where am I? Where am I to say it is to be sent?"

"You'll have to trust me," said he, rising. "You'll have to trust me for the rest of it. Come, governor, I don't think you want to interfere with me. I want to get that tenner and I want safety. If you sign that and give it to me I'll act on the square by you. Come, trust me. I'm a cove that never rounded on a pal or peached. I'm honorable, I am."

I held the pencil between my fingers over the paper, but still hesitated.

"Come, sign," he said, "or I'll gather my traps and I'll be off."

Mechanically I wrote my name and held out the half envelope to him. He took it, went to the mouth of the cave, and pushed the cloth aside, admitting a flash of broad white daylight which blinded me.

I closed my eyes to avoid the glare. I was tired, and worn out, and relieved, and kept my eyes closed. Soon I fell into a state of dreamy insensibility, partly sleep and partly stupor.

Hours must have passed before I opened my eyes again. I suffered from a burning thirst and called for water. A tin mug was put into my hand and I drank eagerly. My head was hot and my mind hopelessly confused and clumsy. Immediately after drinking I fell into complete oblivion.

I opened my eyes next in my own room in the Crescent. My fair, my lily Alice was sitting at the foot of the bed. What a contrast she made with the dark, malign gypsy, the last woman I had set my eyes upon!

It was not until afterwards that this contrast occurred to me. I was heavy and dull when I first awoke. It was not for a day or two I knew the history of events after my gipsy host left the grotto.

When the man came to the town he bought some laudanum and got the ten pounds from Mrs. Brown, came back to the cave and gave me the laudanum. Then he and his wife must have carried or dragged me out of the cave and left me insensible in the field from which I had fallen into the ditch. Here I was found at sundown. When the effects of the opiate wore off I was delirious, and so remained until the moment I opened my eyes and recognized my room and Alice.

We have not yet gone to Arundel Castle, for it was late in the year before I was able to move easily; and after walking up the nave of the church on Stapleton's arm and walking down the nave of the church with Alice on mine, she and I drove straight to the railway station, whence we started on our honeymoon to Florence. I have not seen the gipsies or the grotto since, nor have I any desire to renew my acquaintance with either.

HEIR TO ANNAM.—An heir-apparent has just been born to the throne of the somewhat troubled kingdom of Annam, in Asia. The mother of the young Prince is one of the youngest and most attractive of a hundred or so of wives whom his Majesty Dong-Khan has taken to his bosom. These ladies are divided into nine classes, and are all maintained at the cost of the State, but with divers degrees of dignity according to their rank. Each day a batch of thirty of them mounts guard over the private apartments of their lord and master, while five others attend to the details of the royal toilet, and assist the King to dress himself. He is perfumed by one, his august finger-nails are trimmed by another, and a third adjusts his headdress. The seraglio of the King of Annam is chiefly recruited from among the daughters of the officials of the Court, or of private individuals who are anxious for the privilege of freedom from taxation. The wives of low degree are allowed to marry after the death of their husband; but those of higher rank are compelled to spend the remainder of their lives in watching and prayer at the royal tomb.

THE PLEASURES OF HANGING.

SOME years ago a Frenchman wrote a learned work to prove that death by hanging is the most pleasant and desirable of all modes of quitting the world; that it is not painful, as is vulgarly supposed; but, on the contrary, excites delightful emotions in the mind from the accumulation of blood in the vessels of the brain. Although the statements of French specialists are not always to be implicitly relied upon, we find that those who have tried it substantially confirm the conclusions arrived at, theoretically, by this one.

Lord Bacon, in one of his books, speaks of a friend who was particularly desirous of ascertaining whether criminals, undergoing the extreme penalty of the law, were subject to much pain. For this purpose he threw himself, with a rope round his neck, off a stool, imagining that he could easily remount when he had had enough.

Delightful sensations immediately succeeded the fall, but were very transient, and loss of consciousness soon ensued. Had it not been for the timely arrival of another person the adventurous experimentalist would have been killed.

An eminent French writer puts on record a similar case, the actor being one of his fellow-students. This young man, after an argument on the course of death by hanging, resolved to gratify his curiosity by passing a ligature round his own neck, and attaching it to a hook over the door. To accomplish his purpose he had raised himself on tip-toe and then gradually brought his heels to the ground.

He soon lost all consciousness, but was cut down by a companion, who discovered him in a state of insensibility very soon after, and who, by the prompt application of remedial measures, managed to bring him round.

He stated on recovery that the first effect he experienced was the appearance of a dazzling light before his eyes, accompanied by a tingling in the ears, and very pleasant sensations.

The case is recorded of a man who took the most exquisite delight in what we should call torturing himself. He had often expressed a wish to be hanged, and one day tried the experiment.

He procured a piece of cord, attached it to the ceiling, and suspended himself from it. Fortunately he was cut down by his servant before life was extinct. He said he felt, during the few moments he was hanging, "a thrilling delight, which no language could convey anything like an adequate idea of."

Among the English poet Cowley's papers, found after death, was one which gave a full account of the three attempts at suicide made by the poet, one of them being by hanging. It does not show that the process was fraught with delightful sensations to him, but it does show that it was painless, and as mention of it will not be out of place here, Cowley says that he suspended himself over his chamber door in the Temple, and became perfectly insensible. He only recollected a flash of light appearing before his eyes, unattended by any painful feelings whatever. His weight caused him to fall on to the floor at last; there he was found, and after a time recovered.

Cases are on record of hanged individuals recovering after a lengthy suspension. Grover relates the case of a person who was recovered after hanging for half an hour. A woman named Balshaw, in the reign of Henry VI., was cut down and found alive, after being suspended for a whole night. In this case, however, there was ossification of the larynx, which allowed the woman to breathe.

In the year 1558, a woman, by name Elizabeth, convicted of murdering her child, was hanged at Green Ditch. She remained suspended for so long that one of the bystanders declared if she was not dead he would be hanged for her. The gallows was very high, and the violence with which she fell to the ground when cut down was sufficient of itself to kill. Nevertheless, she was found to be warm, and after being bled, soon recovered. The news reached the ears of the sheriff, evidently a barbarous ruffian, and he, in spite of all entreaty, had her dragged off again to be effectively despatched.

In Evelyn's diary, under date of March 23, 167- is to be found the following entry:

"Supped at Sir William Petty's. . . . Sir William was the son of a clothier's man somewhere in Sussex, and sent from Calais to Caen, where he studied philosophy, he proceeded Doctor of Physick, and was grown famous, as for his learning so for his recovering a poor wench that had been hanged for felony; and her body having been begged as the custom is for the anatomic lecture, he bled her, put her to bed, and with spirits and other means restored her to life. The young scholars joined and made her a little portion, and married her to a man, who had several children by her, she living fifteen years after, as I have been assured."

The woman was named Anne Greene, and the event occurred twenty-five years before the date of the entry. A somewhat lengthy pamphlet was written detailing the whole circumstances. It was prefixed by several copies of verses in Latin, English and French—one of the contributors being Christopher (afterwards Sir Christopher) Wren, the architect—and went into six or seven editions.

BY striving to obtain and to cherish clear and true ideas of right, by emphasizing them in our thoughts, following them in our conduct, and diffusing them through our influence, we strike the strongest and most effective blows at every form of wrong-doing.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A tramp got aboard a coal train near La Junta, Col., and gave the brakeman fifty cents to carry him to the next station. As soon as the brakeman returned to the caboose the "tramp" began heaving coal out of the car, and strung it along the track for three miles. A wagon drove along after the train and began picking up the coal, and when the station was reached the "tramp" got off and went back to the wagon. He had thrown off two wagonloads of coal.

A French provincial lawyer recently died. In his will he directed that an annuity of $100 a year be paid to the servant who should "close his eyes." When this clause was read the servant who had performed the office jumped with joy, but his delight was speedily dampened by the nephew and heir of the man, who reminded the servant that his master only had one eye, and the servant actually failed to get his legacy on this absurd technicality.

A London society journal publishes the following story of "a certain British peer who suffers from kleptomania," and whose name, as well as his distressing malady, is kept carefully covered up. The other day his Lordship purloined his Countess's false teeth and hid them in his boot. His valet, who empties the boot every night and restores stolen property, thought the teeth belonged to another lady and sent them to her with a politely worded note which he had always used for similar emergencies. It was not till the Countess had inquired for her teeth, and the messenger was kicked by the other lady's husband, that things were put right.

A New Haven, Conn., paper tells the following: "A certain barber in this beautiful city has been vexed in spirit because some of his trade seemed in a fair way to slip away from him. The manner of it is this: He has among his customers a large number of Yale freshmen of tender years. These frisky youths insist upon being shaved, although their chins may be as smooth as the surface of a billiard ball. The barber saw that, in order to keep that class of trade, he must convince it that it had hair on its face, so he bethought himself of a scheme. He took a very fine razor and honed it down to a very fine edge. It accomplished, however, more than that, for when it was drawn across the smooth flesh it made a noise as if the points were being scraped off a barb-wire fence. He tried it on the first freshman that came in, and the man went away looking pleased to death. The tonsorial artist now flourishes, and the freshman goes on his way rejoicing."

The optician swindling scheme, as it might be termed, which was so successfully worked upon credulous residents in South Jersey some time ago, has now been tried with favorable results to the rogues upon a woman in Farmersville, Mass. She was visited by two men, who inquired anxiously about her eyes, which were a constant source of trouble to the woman. They told her that they could perform an operation which would certainly remove the trouble. The woman was pleased, and asked how much it would cost; but they replied that they could tell better when all was over. She then submitted to the operation, which consisted of putting some smarting liquid in the eye and the flourishing of a pair of pincers. When all was over the would-be surgeons declared they had removed a cataract, and the bill was $150. The woman did not have the sum to give, but paid $50, and the men left, saying they would return in a week and see how their patient was doing. Of course they did not benefit the woman in the least.

A Michigan paper says: "The old adage of a man being 'mean enough to steal pennies off a dead man's eyes' has been actually worked out here, and the meanest man on earth, James Hughes by name, has been arrested, and is now in jail for the offence. Recently Watson Sherman was accidentally killed and the body was laid out in Walker's undertaking rooms. The dead man's face was battered horribly, and a silver half dollar was put on one of the eyes to hold the lid down. Hughes loafed about the body until he thought he was unobserved, and then stole the silver piece, substituting a copper cent in its place. Hughes was soon after arrested and pleaded guilty, but excused himself on the plea that he had been drinking and did not know what he was doing. During the trial the court room was crowded, and the spectators shouted: 'Brain the blackguard,' 'Tar and feather the brute,' 'Lynch him,' and the Marshal had to keep a strict watch for the safety of the prisoner. Justice Rutherford held Hughes in $1000 bail, and he will be tried for his sacrilegious larceny at the next session of the Circuit Court."

Blighted Prospects

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Our Young Folks.

A BOY'S PLUCK.

BY L. D.

"NOW I'll be up to the fellows this morning. They call me milksop! Now I'll be the sharpest of the sharp; see if I don't give them a volley. They'll not expect to see me round the corner."

So soliloquized Master Jackie Walsh, a youngster of nine, halting in his snowy walk, and dashing off his cap and schooling in red-hot haste, to begin shaping and moulding those surprise snowballs for his prankish friends, who, as it seemed, were almost too many for him—too much of a good thing, as he sometimes said.

Ah! well, there lay plenty of snow ready to his hands, snow at his feet, snow on the roofs of houses, snow on the trees—a fairy world was it, if he had had only time to admire.

Mould and shape away, Jackie. But what was that? A shout like an Indian's war-whoop, and such a volley of well-aimed snowballs from round the corner, where he never dreamt that a foe lurked. They hit his head, they hit his nose; the snow sputtered into his eyes, his mouth. Thud, thud, they came; some struck the wall behind him, and remained there, but many whizzed through the crisp, sunlit air, and came thwack into his neck, the cold, chilly snow drifting down his back and making him shiver.

"Milksop" mingled with the war-whoop, and Jackie, instead of giving them like for like, and tossing back the name as something he did not know, tried to poke his fist into his eyes and began to cry.

Poor Jackie!

At this juncture Miss Minnie Gray came tripping by, in pretty fur-tipped garments.

"Here comes a lady!" was the cry of the assaulting party, and hostilities were suspended for a moment.

What girl could help smiling inwardly at Jackie's tormentors, or sympathizing with and pitying the boy, who could stand there, such a target for their fun, so ruefully comic?

"I'd pick up my cap and bag and walk on, and not mind them," said she, coming up and laying her hand on his arm.

"You say that because you're a girl. You wouldn't if you were a boy," answered Jackie.

"Oh, whether I were a girl or boy, I'd never stand and be beaten flat with snowballs."

She laughed, a silvery laugh, noting that knot of prankish fellows grinning round the corner, and staying their hands lest they should hit a girl, which no boy among them would think of doing.

"I should give them charge for charge," continued Miss Minnie, like an ill-adviser, considering how events shaped themselves.

"And so I will," cried Jackie, not liking that laugh, and a little hot with temper.

Away went a ball from his hand, wide of its mark, if it had any mark at all. It struck a little old woman, in a little red cloak and little black bonnet, carrying a little milk-can, who chanced to cross between Jackie and the enemy: struck her in the back part of her neck. She started, she screamed, and down she went, a poor, little, huddled-up heap of cloak, bonnet and milk-can. The milk emptied into the bonnet, which came off, her head suspiciously near the can, as if it would fain thrust itself inside, in the indignity of lying there; and this poor chance victim was no other than Betty Crusty, as she was known in the village, and, as the boys said, worthy of her name.

"Shame, milksop!" came from the indignant school boys, clustering round her, like grinning magpies, trying to look grave, and failing.

"Boys ought to be banished from the land," screamed the old lady, attempting to rise, and dropping back again, for she had, somehow, sprained her ankle; a pretty kettle of fish, as she expressed it, and she a good step from home.

"We'll carry you," cried one of the kindly crew of boys.

"Me carried by a pack of grinning boys? Not I!" moaned the poor old soul, and clasped her hands at the very notion.

"Yes, let them—they'll be gentle: boys are not what they seem—we none of us thought to hurt you," pleaded compassionate Miss Minnie.

"Girls have no business with snowballs," was the snappish reply: and Minnie blushed, and held her peace. But one of the boys said:

"No, we're very like what the poet says of life—we are not what we seem—except milksop there—he seems a coward, and is one."

"Well, I suppose I must," agreed the little old lady, sitting in the snow.

"Yes; what is to be must be," was the glib reply, "as the man said when the monkey made him dance and he turned the organ."

Whereupon the rollicking crew joined hands, and made a sort of chair of state between them, hoisted Betty gently into it, and bore her homewards, tramping and keeping time with their feet to this ditty, which they chanted in chorus:

"Make three steps, and now make one,
Carry the old woman to London."

As for Master Jackie, he walked in their rear, meekly carrying the milk-can, while Miss Minnie walked by Betty's side, holding on her bonnet, which in the last fall lost a string, and was troublesome.

Once in the cottage, they made her a couch with three chairs and some cushions, and Minnie bathed the foot and bandaged it with a doctor's authority, keeping Jackie within doors, and banishing the merry young bearers outside.

"Won't you forgive him?—he's sorry," pleaded Minnie, like a peacemaker, when she had done all she could think of for Betty's comfort, drawing crestfallen Jackie to her side.

"No," was the very unlovely reply. "I neither gives nor takes; I never offend folk nor never ask their forgiveness."

"Oh! but we all offend," the little girl ventured to say, "and have need of giving and taking forgiveness."

But Betty persisted in saying,

"Well, I'll never forgive him till I knows he has pluck and has heart; when he shows me he ain't a milksop, as they called him, I'll forgive him."

Thus they parted, Jackie going out, as it were, with the bane of an old woman's anger upon him.

"Has pluck and has heart." The words haunted Jackie as the days flowed on; they even wove themselves into his dreams at night. Somehow, the boys knew of the uncomplimentary words spoken, and many a sly cut they gave him thereupon. One never-to-be-forgotten night they came to him, rousing him from his sleep, like a living voice—and what words mingled therewith?

"Betty Crusty's house on fire, and she in flames." These were the words he felt sure he heard, and a very whirlwind of people seemed to sweep by beneath his window. He started from his bed and dived into his clothes. Like a horrible dream was it to him, as he tore along through the night. He knew where she dwelt, and quite alone was she, no other habitation near—and she a prisoner as by his hand. He knew a short cut; he was soon there; no time to be a milksop, or wanting in courage. All was blackness, darkness and a hush as of death reigned there. Had the fire done its work? had it consumed poor old Betty, unable to rise or flee from its devouring jaws? He fancied the walls looked like the husk of what had been, looming in the pitch darkness. What should he do? Go in, and see what had befallen her, even if he found only her small, charred, lifeless body, and nothing more. He made for the door. It yielded; it was not barred, nor was it burnt. In death like silence, which made him shiver, he kindled a light at the embers smouldering yet in the grate, and there she lay, on the little couch Miss Minnie Gray had made her, not smouldering, not burnt, but sleeping peacefully as a little child.

The light he flashed over her face awoke her.

"You!" was her first cry. "Thieves! Robbers!" Then all her thoughts seemed to concentrate in the one word which came.

"You!"

Oh, the scorn of her tone as she recognized him.

"Yes, I thought your house was burning, and I came to save you."

He was sobbing by her side. That scornful "You!" broke his heart: when he had come with the pluck and courage of a boy's soul, prompting him to dare and to do—and forgot to be a milksop. And poor Betty Crusty's heart was cleft in twain at the sight of his tears.

"Bless the boy—milksop or not, he has a tender heart, and pluck too, to come here to save me. No, he ain't a milksop—now, at any rate—and I forgive him."

So spoke the old woman—conscience whispering.

"And, from this time, I'll give and take. Will ye forgive me, dearie, for a hard old woman, as don't deserve it?"

And Jackie said "Yes," smiling through a mist of tears.

So a kiss of forgiveness was exchanged between the two, there in the hush of midnight; but that was their secret. Jackie fancied those prankish chums of his had another, and caused that midnight cry which led to the kiss, but he never knew.

"SEE HOW YOU LIKE IT."

BY H. E. DAVIS.

"NURSE, can't you find anything to amuse me? I do feel so dull."

"Well, Miss Alice, you ought not to be, with so many beautiful dolls and toys."

"Oh! I'm tired of them all. I want to go out!"

"Dear me!" said the nurse; "how people differ, to be sure. Thousands of poor children would be glad to come in here and warm themselves at this nice fire, and play with your pretty things."

"Yes; but I want to go out, nurse. I do wish I was a poor child, and then I could do anything I liked!"

"Do you think all poor children can do just as they please, Miss Alice?"

"Why, of course," Miss Alice replied, opening her dark eyes very wide. "Just look at that little girl out in the snow; if she had a papa and a nurse they would not let her be out; and I do love the snow!"

"Ah yes, Miss Alice dear. The snow is one of the most beautiful things in the world, but to be out in it, dearie, that's different—in a thin frock and torn boots, very cold, and certainly very hungry, trying to sell matches. Try that and see how you like it, Miss Alice!"

"I should not mind a bit being cold and hungry, nurse!"

"I am thankful, my pet, you don't know what cold and hunger mean; and I hope you never may!"

"But I want to know, nurse," Alice persisted. "When I'm a big girl, I'll be cold and hungry, and go out in the snow. I want to know everything in the world, and how everybody feels."

"You will know enough soon enough, my pet," nurse replied; "but I hope you will never know what it means to be cold and hungry!"

"Do you know, nursie?"

"Yes, my pet, I do. Come and sit here, near the fire, and I'll tell you a story."

"A true story?—do let it be quite true."

"Yes, Miss Alice, a true story."

"Once on a time, long ago," nurse began, "there was a poor woman living in the country: she had two children, a boy and a girl, and her husband was a miner, and worked all day digging up the coals, that make such a warm, bright fire. But one day there was a dreadful accident in the mine: first an explosion of gas, then a flood, and all the poor fellows who were not burned to death were drowned, and there were thirty-seven of them, men and boys, down there. Father and brother were there; and mother stood so patiently waiting for hours—perhaps for days. It was winter time, and the ground covered with snow—and I, being a thoughtless child, could not help thinking how beautiful it was.

"At last I dropped down fast asleep—I was so cold and hungry! Some one carried me home and put me to bed, and soon mother came home, looking so tired and ill and changed that I hardly knew her. She told me father and Mark were dead, killed in the mine, and that I should never see them again. Mother sat quite still and silent, and I sat still too, just holding her hand; then I think we were both very ill for a long time. But one day, Miss Alice, we seemed to get better together, and I woke up, for a man came to turn us out of our little cottage, because we had not paid the rent. Then some kind friends helped mother and gave her work; but she was not very strong, and the cottage seemed so empty without father and Mark.

"But dear mother's troubles did not last very long, and then I was left alone, a poor, homeless, helpless little girl. Do you think, dearie, it was any comfort to me then that I could do as I liked? I was the most unhappy little creature in the world, till a kind lady took compassion, and sent me to school. After a time I was allowed to wait on the young ladies, and when I grew older I was engaged by the eldest to be her own maid."

"Who was she, nursie?—why do you not stay with her always?"

"Because Some One who loved her dearly took her from us, darling. She was your own dear mamma, and she left you to my care, and I promised her faithfully that I would never leave you till you were old enough to take care of yourself."

"I don't think that's a very nice story at all, nurse," Alice said, discontentedly. "It does not tell a bit what it's like to be poor."

Nurse went to the window and looked out.

The snow had ceased falling, and the sun was trying to shine through the grey clouds.

Men were busy sweeping the streets and door-steps, and after a good long look nurse thought it was fine enough to venture out for a few minutes.

Nurse told Miss Alice to put on her thick boots; and then she ran down to the library, where Mr. Ellacombe, little Alice's papa, was busy reading, and told him all the child had said to her.

"Wants to be poor, does she? Well, it's a strange fancy for a child, but take her with you, by all means. I know I can trust you."

And so nurse and Alice went for a walk that sunny, snowy afternoon.

Very soon they left the square where Mr. Ellacombe lived, and turned up a street, and then entered a court at the farther end.

"This is not a pretty place to be poor in, nurse," Alice whispered. "It's so dark and grimy."

"Most places where poor people live are dark and grimy, dear," nurse said sadly. "But come on, and see Mrs. Hill."

"Must we go up those stairs without any carpet?" Alice asked, wonderingly. "And see, the windows are broken, and the floors have holes, and it's so cold! Oh, nurse, I am so frightened! Come home! Come home! I don't like this!"

"In a few minutes, dearie. I want to show you what being poor really means; then you will see how you like it."

Alice followed her nurse up the dismal stairs to the very top, and they entered a room that seemed almost dark and very cold. Round the fire-place sat three little children, all crying, and near the window sat a pale, tired-looking woman embroidering a muslin pinafore. She could scarcely see, and her hands could hardly hold the needle—they were so cold; still, there would be no food or fire till the work was taken home and paid for.

"Oh, nurse, I'm so sorry," she said, rising. "I did not think you wanted the pinafores so soon. I've worked as hard as possible."

"Too hard, I'm afraid," nurse said pleasantly. "I'm not at all in haste, but Miss Alice wanted a walk, and I thought I would just step round and see how you are getting on."

"Work is scarce, and times are bad," Mrs. Hill said wearily, "but I have the children, so I suppose I ought not to complain."

"I see you have two of the pinafores done, so I may as well take them with me, and pay you for them now; it may be a little help, Mary."

"It will save us from starvation, nurse," Mrs. Hill cried, bursting into tears. "My poor little babies have not had a morsel of food to-day."

"Then I'll go and get them some this very moment. Come Miss Alice."

The child was sobbing quietly. The gaunt little children, with their eager, hungry faces, frightened her, and with the true instinct of childish unselfishness she longed to ask them to go home with her to her warm nursery.

"Had they no breakfast, nursie?" she asked when they got outside.

"No, darling; and very likely no tea last night."

"Is that what being poor means, nurse?"

"Yes, my child, that is true real poverty."

"Then I don't like it; I think it's dreadful! Papa often says I ought to be a generous little girl, because I'll be rich one day, and when I am I will not allow any one in the world to be poor. It is so cold, and miserable, and unhappy."

"Yes, my pet; and if every rich little girl only would remember that she could make some poor little girl happy ever so easily, just by a little self-denial; think how much more pleasant the world would be for every one."

"I'll never wish to be poor again, nursie; and when papa gives me some silver monies I'll not spend them on toys or toffee, but send them to the poor little children we saw to-day."

"That's right, Miss Alice; and whenever you want to be poor and have your own way, think of Mrs. Hill's little girls in Dark Court, and see how you like it."

THE CURSE OF GOLD.—There is a singular superstition in the mining districts that the discoverers of hidden treasures in the bowels of the earth are sure to meet with a violent end. Many instances are at times adduced in support of the statement, and go far to show that numbers of adventurers literally die in their shoes. The original proprietors of close on forty successful mines have been accounted for in this way. Twelve were shot, three were ingulfed, while the rest disappeared in the cities of Dakota and New Mexico, and were never heard of afterwards.

The following are said to be facts: George H. Fryer, from whom the Fryer Hill Mine had its name, committed suicide in Denver. Two years before his death, he possessed one million dollars; the expenses of his funeral had to be paid by the authorities. The discoverer of the Standard Mine in California, was swallowed up by an avalanche. Colonel Storey, another wealthy miner, was killed by Indians. William Fairweather, who brought to light the hidden treasures of Alder Gulch, came to his death by drinking and riotous living.

WHEN Xenophanes was called timorous because he would not venture his money in a game of dice, he said, "I confess that I am exceedingly timorous, for I dare not do an ill thing." On the contrary, a man of vicious modesty complies with everything, and is only fearful of doing what may look singular in the company where he is engaged. He falls in with the torrent and lets himself go to every action or discourse, however unjustifiable in itself, so it be in vogue among the present party. This, though one of the most common, is one of the most ridiculous dispositions in human nature, that men should not be afraid of speaking or acting in a dissolute or irrational manner, but that one who is in their company should be ashamed of governing himself by the principles of reason and virtue.

HURRYING.—Among the many causes of poor and inefficient work is the habit of hurry, which takes possession of some busy people. Having, or imagining they have, more to do in a given time than can be done properly, they grow confused, agitated, and nervous; and, under this pressure, they proceed with the work in hand without requisite deliberation and care, perhaps omitting parts of it, sometimes important parts, and producing at last an imperfect and inferior performance which can neither be permanent nor satisfactory. There is hardly any employment, from the simplest manual work to the most complex and difficult mental labor, that does not suffer from this cause.

A yet more terrible end had William Farrell in a hospital at San Francisco. He had discovered the rich mine at Meadow Lake; but hundreds of deceived gold-seekers surrounded his bed, "gnashing and grinning so horribly that he could not die." The owner of the Homestake Mine became a highwayman; one day he attacked a mail-coach and the attendants shot him dead. John Homer, of the Homer Mine, spent his last cent, and then put a bullet through his brain. "Doughnut Bill," "Old Eureka," "Ninemile Clarke," died literally in their shoes, being killed in saloon scuffles. Montana Plummer, who discovered one of the richest mines in the world, and was sheriff for a time, died on the gallows.

MRS. ABRAM BUNN, of Schellsburg, Pa., a lady 80 years of age, visited friends in Bradford the other day, and a journal of that place reports that "she started for her home in the afternoon through a blinding snow storm, making the remark, as an answer to the earnest entreaties of her friends to remain over night, that she had never been away from home but one night since she was married, and she would not allow a little snow to make the number two."

A farm in Green county, Alabama, containing of 954 acres, was sold under mortgage at Eutaw the other day and brought only 40 cents per acre.

THROUGH TIME.

BY WM. W. LONG.

How can I sit in the shadows.
  Content through long, long days,
In all the future that shall come,
  Never to meet thy gaze,
Never to see thy beautiful eyes,
  Or kiss thy warm, red mouth;
Or feel the odor of thy breath,
  Sweet as zephyrs from the south?

How can I wander lonely,
  With the dark word "nevermore"
Saddening my inmost being,
  My soul to its deepest core?
Though I stray thro' tropical bowers,
  And roam in every land,
Your presence will ever haunt me,
  And the touch of your slender hand.

I may ramble through the city,
  And merry faces greet;
But amid the din and bustle
  I shall not see you, sweet.
In merry halls of pleasure,
  'Mid scenes of joy and mirth,
I shall never meet you, darling,
  Or hear your voice on earth.

You say we shall meet in heaven,
  In the sinless city of gold,
And stray by crystal waters,
  And tales of love unfold.
'Tis sweet to think of the future,
  Of deathless joy in that clime;
But, oh, my beautiful darling,
  How shall I live thro' time?

OF FESTAL CAKES.

Confectons of flour have, at all times and among all nations, had a conspicuous place in the performance of social and religious rites, and England would seem to be specially remarkable for the number of such festa. There is scarcely an English county without its special cake; certainly there are few festal occasions unmarked by its consumption in some form. The daily event of marriage gives one opportunity to cake makers, and, in this case the cake is so important that it is strange so few seek to know the origin and meaning of the sugary structures.

The gorgeous and indigestible bride-cake of to-day is eaten in deference to the rules of conventionality; but it once had a poetical significance which it may be interesting to recall. For the modern wedding-cake is but the glorified descendant of the Roman *lost*, which was broken by the newly-made husband before the priests of Jove in the citadel, and eaten with his wife, in token that thereafter they were to share each other's goods and be dependent on each other for comfort and subsistence.

It will be generally found that many of the cakes eaten at different seasons, in different places, bear some sort of resemblance to each other, and that the interior of an ordinary mince-pie is one of the most favorite bases for these confections.

"God-cakes," which stand first on the list of commemorative dainties, being the fare chosen for New Year's Day in Coventry and various other parts of England, are of this nature. They are triangular in form; but by no means of the deceptive character of a three-cornered puff, whose hollowness and general delusiveness, as regards its interior, is eminently calculated to impress upon the youthful mind the melancholy fact that things are not always what they seem.

They are moderately thick, and should have a lining of at least the same dimensions. Like the Simnel, they vary in size according to the price; some being sold on New Year's Day, in the streets of Coventry, at two for a penny, whilst others are manufactured of a size and richness which render them a worthy gift for the festive season.

Of much more gastronomic and general importance is the next cake festal, occurring on the Feast of the Epiphany, or Twelfth Night, though the custom has much declined of recent years.

From the most remote period of Christianity it had been customary to commemorate the Three Kings by indulgence in a pleasantry called the Election of Kings by Bean, a practice probably adapted, like many other Christian ceremonies, from some Pagan custom, perhaps from that observed by Roman children, who, at the end of their Saturnalia, drew lots, with beans, to see who should be King. Subsequently, in England the idea was conceived of inserting the bean in a cake, a similar practice prevailing in France.

The pancake, eaten, as everyone knows, on the day prior to the beginning of Lent, is a decided landmark in the calendar, and may, perhaps, be regarded as an indication of the coming spring. Pancakes have been associated with this day from time immemorial, though of their origin as a suitable refection for Shrove-tide, there is no evidence.

In Elizabeth's time, the Eton College cook fastened a pancake to the school knocker on Shrove Tuesday; and at Westminster on that day the practice of tossing a pancake still prevails. The cook, on entering the school-room, hurls the pancake aloft, and the boy who catches it unbroken carries it to the deanery, and receives an honorarium of a pound.

Following close upon the eating of the Carnival dainties comes the Simnel Festival, peculiar to Mid-lent, or Mothering Sunday, or, as it is also called, Refreshment Sunday. As pancakes are used as the sign of festivity before the austerities of the Fast season commence, so the Simnel marks the relaxation permitted at Mid-Lent. Evidently the usage of Simnel cakes is of great antiquity. The name is probably derived from "simila," fine flour, the term "simanellus" among the mediæval writers being used to denote a cake.

Consecrated cakes at religious festivals were common enough among the Teutonic races, being, of course, but the survival of the Pagan customs Good Friday buns come next in the cake calendar, and are eaten in supposed pious commemoration of one of the greatest events in the Christian tragedy.

Tansy cakes and tansy puddings, wherewith the joys of Eastertide are celebrated, are of a less substantial and indigestible character than their predecessors, the cakes being about an eight of an inch thick and seven inches in diameter, white in color, and having a mingled flavor of sweet and bitter. This is symbolical of the bitter herbs commanded at the Paschal Feast, and of the sweetness of its joys.

Next comes the great festival of mince-pies and plum-puddings. Mince pies were in great favor as early as 1590, but they were then known as shred, or Christmas pies, the latter name being the most usual. It will be remembered that the self-approving Jack Horner was eating a dainty thus described when he uttered his famous remark. The Puritans had a fervent horror of Christmas pies. Subsequently the Society of Friends placed their veto upon them, though, we believe, it has since been removed.

You are so to put forth the power that God has given you; you are so to give, and sacrifice to give, as to earn the eulogium pronounced on the woman, "She hath done what she could." Do it now. It is not a safe thing to leave a generous feeling to the cooling influences of a cold world. If you intend to do a mean thing wait until to-morrow; if you are to do a noble thing, do it now—now!

Grains of Gold.

Good counsels observed are chains to grace.

We give advice by the bucket, but take it by the grain.

No man ever prayed heartily without learning something.

It is a good thing to learn caution by the misfortunes of others.

Let prayer be the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening.

The violence done us by others is often less painful than that which we do to ourselves.

Here is a day now before me; a day is a fortune and an estate; who loses a day loses life.

Repentance begins in the humiliation of the heart and ends in the reformation of the life.

Devote each day to the object then in time, and every evening will find something done.

Do not wait for extraordinary circumstances to do good actions; try to use ordinary situations.

The best and sweetest flowers of Paradise God gives to his people when they are upon their knees.

It is with charity as with money—the more we stand in need of it, the less we have to give away.

Pride is a vice, which pride itself inclines every man to find in others, and to overlook in himself.

Tears are the softening showers which cause the seed of heaven to spring up in the human heart.

The cheapest pleasures are the best, and nothing is more costly than sin, yet we mortgage futurity, counting it but little loss.

When we feel feel a strong desire to thrust advice upon others, it is usually because we suspect their weakness; but we ought rather suspect our own.

Femininities.

Pleasure's couch is often virtue's grave.

The art of pleasing is the art of deceiving.

The more pets the old maid has the more pettish the old maid is apt to be.

Modesty is regarded as the proper caper in Paris now, and dresses are worn long.

Some people's tongues are deadly double rippers, always running somebody down.

Love is an old, old story; yet few of the girls murmur "chestnut" when they hear it.

A little petroleum added to the water with which waxed or polished floors are washed improves their looks.

A young mother looked through 36 different novels to find a name for her girl baby, and finally settled on Marier.

Beauty is a transitory flower; even while it lasts it palls on the roving sense when held too near, or dwelling there too long.

Pride is like the beautiful accala, that lifts its head proudly above its neighbor plants—forgetting that it too, like them, has its roots in the dirt.

The following advertisement appears in a Boston paper: "Wanted—A person to take a dog to walk mornings; the best of reference required. Apply," etc.

Emperor William sends a small present to each of his great-grandchildren every Saturday night. He shows almost feminine affection for their father, Prince William.

If roses are wilted before they can be placed in water, immerse the ends of the stalks in very hot water for a minute or two, and they will regain their pristine freshness.

Eve was in one respect the luckiest woman that ever lived. Adam never turned from the breakfast table with "I wish I could taste the old-fashioned cooking of my mother."

A popular young woman of Orlando, Fla., has a large and intelligent dog who, whenever a visitor stays too late, sits down in front of him, yawns and shows signs of being very sleepy.

A lady at Augusta, Me., who thought that a needle, accidentally dropped in her slipper, had run into her foot, sent for two doctors, who discovered the needle imbedded in the sole of the slipper.

He: "I must say, Emma, that you've grown quite handsome. There, now, can't you give me a compliment in return?" She: "Well, I should say that you are a gentleman of most excellent taste."

Empress Elizabeth of Austria is endeavoring to reduce her stoutness by fencing and other vigorous exercise. She practices with the foils for two hours daily, her antagonist being the Archduchess Valeri.

A grande dame of Paris was asked the other day by a friend why she had dressed for a soiree in a less decollete fashion than usual. "My dear," was the reply, "I have resolved to throw a veil over the past."

It's just awful funny to hear three or four married women in a room talking about their husbands. It's he this, he that and he everything, and each he of each she is the queerest he about the house each she ever saw.

When a Webster county, Ga., man married he was unable to present his wife an engagement ring, and in lieu thereof gave her a yearling heifer. This offering grew and multiplied, and the result is a small herd of cattle.

First party: "Say, Jones, who is that tall, angular and extremely thin woman talking to Bickel?" Second party: "Why, that's his wife." First party: "You don't say so! Well, I think if I were Bicks I would have her upholstered."

Friend, to widow mourning her third husband: "I sympathize deeply with you, my dear Mrs. Black, and was sorry not to be with you in your hour of affliction." Widow, sadly: "Ah, my friend, you don't know what it is to lose husbands."

A very juvenile wedding took place at Fairmount, Ill., a few days ago, the high contracting parties being Grant Martin and Gracie Silvers, aged 15 and 13 respectively. The singular thing is that the parents of both boy and girl consented to the marriage.

Leap year, thus far, hasn't even furnished the average number of marriages in Michigan, and the papers there account for it by "the unreasonable fear of the girls that folks will believe, if they say 'yes,' that they have been taking advantage of leap year."

Bobby was at a neighbor's, and in response to a piece of bread and butter politely said, "Thank you." "That's right, Bobby," said the lady. "I like to hear little boys say 'thank you.'" "Yes, ma told me I must say that if you gave me anything to eat, even if it was nothing but bread and butter."

Letters a la mode: "Pray excuse delay in answering. I would have written sooner, but——, I don't know what you will think of me. (Lie, lie, lie.) I have been trying to get a chance, but so many things to do, etc. Don't know how it is. Do forgive me, dear. Darling, I know I have been remiss, but ——. Yours sincerely." That's over.

Worth, the French dressmaker, lives in the suburbs of Paris in a palace that covers several acres and is gorgeously furnished. Once a year it is thrown open to his employes, and the fete lasts a day and a night. One that day each of the women employed by Worth is permitted to select a dress from his stock, and it is made up according to her directions.

Among the residents of Hampton county, S. C., is said to be a woman, 45 years old, who has followed the plow for 30 years and engaged in the usual round of farm labor. Last year she made 9 bales of cotton, besides provisions, with one plow. She has dug one well, built five chimneys, and frequently splits 100 rails a day. She has a good home and enjoys excellent health.

Masculinities.

A man whose heart does not respond to an act of doing good or giving happiness is no longer a man.

An Atchison, Kan., attorney recently fell asleep in court while a case he was trying was in progress.

The philosopher says: "Wise men hesitate." Perhaps that is why so few men are in any haste to pay their bills.

There are more people cross-eyed in the tongue than in the eyes; they talk one way while they are thinking the other.

Sameness in dress does not always look well. The man who wears a shiny silk hat does not want a shiny coat to go with it.

A clothing advertisement profusely displayed in the Boston horse-cars bids men to stand up and give their seats to ladies.

All the girls in Pewamo, Mich., except-ing 3, have availed themselves of the glorious opportunity that leap year grants.

When a man has lots of property and no need for money he can borrow at a low rate of interest. The usurer goes for the anxious man.

Justice Duffy, of New York, is in receipt of letters commending him for telling a woman whose hair was banged that she looked like a goat.

Marriage is said to be a lottery at best; but if each party in the case would see to it that the appellation of blank did not apply to him or her, more prizes would be the result.

A leap year conversation: Angelina—"Augustus, will you be mine?" Augustus—"My dear girl, I will be a brother to you—but your husband, oh, no! that cannot be."

Some writers waste many words to tell which women are the finest; but it all comes down to the old proposition that the finest is the one who is talking especially to you just now.

A good habit for some people to cultivate is the habit of silence. Under some conditions a man can make more noise in the world by keeping his mouth shut than in any other way.

Haste turns usually upon a matter of 10 minutes too late, and may be avoided by a habit like that of Lord Nelson, to which he ascribed his success in life, of being 10 minutes too early.

"He: "I declare, Miss Angeline, you treat me worse than your dog!" She: "Oh, Mr. de Moyenne, how can you say so? I'm sure I never made the slightest difference between you!"

Policeman Peter Brannick, of New York, came into a fortune of nearly $500,000 by the recent death of an uncle in San Francisco, and was about to resign from the force when he himself died.

If a young man is very anxious to know what a young woman really thinks of him, he can generally find out by questioning her little brother; but nine times out of ten he will wish afterward that he hadn't.

No confidence in that doctor. Wife, to third husband: "If you feel so ill, John, I think we had better send for my old family physician." Third husband, somewhat hastily: "No, my dear, I would prefer to send for some one else."

Princess Beatrice is so offended with the treatment of her husband, Prince Henry of Battenburg, that she hardly speaks to any of her brothers or sisters. She has petitioned the Queen to make her husband a duke, and is desirous of abdicating her royal rank.

A plug hat over 100 years old was recently presented to a Michigan City merchant. The account of the event gives no reason for the presentation, but it is supposed that it was because the merchant offended his neighbors by persisting in wearing a plug hat 200 years old.

A 9-year-old boy in a neighboring town in this county was thus addressed one day by his mother, after some visitors had left the house: "Why, how well you have behaved, my son, while the callers were in. Quoth the dutiful son: "I had to mother; my pants were ripped."

"Well, Johnny," said the Sunday-school teacher to one of her little pupils, "I understand there's a new baby at your house. What do they call it?" "Why," said Johnny, with childish frankness, "mamma calls it a little angel, but this morning papa called it a blessed nuisance!"

An Arizona audience dislikes to be disappointed. Three thousand persons gathered to see a murderer hanged, and their enjoyment was spoiled by a reprieve from the governor. That night a party of miners, who had walked ten miles to witness the execution, caught a horse thief and hanged him to a tree.

During a divorce trial at Plainfield, Ill., the fact was brought out that the husband, who was the defendant in the suit, persisted in sleeping between sheepskins at all seasons of the year and in all kinds of weather. He declared that no bed clothes were equal to them as a promoter of comfort and health.

A Minnesota judge, in pronouncing the death sentence, tenderly observed: "If guilty, you deserve the fate which awaits you; if innocent, it will be a gratification for you to feel that you were hanged without such a crime on your conscience; in either case you will be delivered from a world of care."

A farmer in Clinton county, Missouri, who learned that the grand jury was trying to beat him up for working on Sunday, at once had his four sons summoned to appear before the grand jury as witnesses against him. He was fined $1 and costs, a total of $5. His sons' fees and mileage amounted to $2.50 each, a total of $10.40.

A great many people in Paris make as much as $10 a night as "knotmakers" or "tiers of cravats." During the social season the good "knot maker" jumps into the cab at about 6 o'clock in the evening and is whirled to his customers, whose cravats he ties according to the prevailing mode. For two minutes' work he receives from 40 cents to one dollar.

Recent Book Issues.

"The Tobacco Plug and Cigar" is the title of a little warning pamphlet issued by I. C. Welcome, Yarmouth, Me. Price 15 cents.

"The Interstate Monthlies," Grammar, Intermediate, Primary and Primer are most excellent for general reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic, either for public schools or private. The matter is of the best, and the pictures, type, paper, etc., of corresponding excellence. Published at 30 Franklin street, Boston.

"The Invalid's Own Book" is a collection of receipts for preparing food, drinks, cordials, etc., for the sick by Lady Cust of England. They have the exceptional merit of being all very simple, good, cheap, and told in language so plain that a child could make them. It is a very useful book. Gottsberger, New York, publisher. For sale by Porter & Coates.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The New England Magazine is a very interesting and valuable monthly specially devoted to the history and general development of its name section, but at the same time of interest to all. The February number just issued contains a great deal in the way of illustrated and other articles that show there is both a field for its work and that it does it well. Published at 36 Bromfield street, Boston.

The English Illustrated Magazine for February contains an edifying paper on "The Weasel and His Family," by Benjamin Scott, with numerous excellent illustrations; a paper on "Fowls," by Harrison Wier, and a continuation of the attractive series on "Coaching Days and Coaching Ways," by W. Outram Tristram, who this time deals with "The Portsmouth Road." "The Mediation of Ralph Hardlot" is continued; "That Girl in Black" is concluded in this number. The "Et Cetera" sustains its reputation as a special and admirable feature of the magazine. Published by Macmillan & Co., New York.

An Active Life.—A man who has always been active—always doing something in the way of business—cannot withdraw entirely from active pursuits without permanent injury. Enforced idleness becomes irksome, and he is unable to enjoy himself. He constantly longs for the bustle and routine of business, his mind lacks occupation, and he simply rusts from the inactivity unusual to an energetic man. In other words, although aware that his system needs rest, his active mind will not permit him to rest.

He finds he has adhered so closely to business that it is difficult to wean himself from it. Instead of deriving physical benefit from relaxation, it is a positive injury to him, because of his natural indisposition to rest. He cannot throw aside his business habits; he must have something to do. He learns that he should have accustomed himself to little periods of recreation all through life, and not postponed his holiday until he has lost the capacity to enjoy it.

Every sensible man, who has the means and opportunity, recuperates himself by frequent pauses for recreation. He does not defer his period of pleasure until the closing months of a worn-out life. He is too wise to expect impossibilities of nature—the recuperation of an utterly exhausted body. He has had his comfort and enjoyment in due season, and is grateful to Heaven that he possesses the means to procure all the comforts of life which he wisely uses to prolong his existence. M. S.

Unconventional People.—Everybody has encountered the people who take to themselves what they suppose to be the credit of being unconventional, who offer a statement of that fact as the sufficient excuse for all sorts of violations of good breeding and social rules, and who assume the license to do as they please, as if they had the power to lift themselves above the authority of ordinary canons of behavior. It is a pity that these foolishly self-blinded and, for the most part, decidedly unpleasant people cannot be made to see their conduct in its true aspect.

It should not be forgotten that society is, in a sense, in an artificial state. Whatever general natural principles underlie it, its formulated rules are purely arbitrary, and it is, in effect, a conventional arrangement. It follows that one who wishes to take part in its social life must accept its conditions. To attempt to be unconventional in society is an anomaly and a contradiction of terms. M. S.

A fussy, nervous mother who is always trembling for the safety of her darlings, and will not let them do anything that their companions rejoice in, either makes her sons weak and deficient in self-reliance or drives them to deceitful habits of doing on the sly what they would not wish her to find out, though very likely in itself the amusement is harmless enough.

It is astonishing how few people know how to hang a horseshoe properly to make the charm work. Perhaps this is why there is so much bad luck in the world. The shoe should be placed points up. Otherwise "the luck will run off." Place the curve downward is the injunction of a seventh daughter, full of inherited witchcraft.

Eureka, I have found it. What have I found? I have found that Warner's Log Cabin Cough and Consumption Remedy is the best in the market. You don't have to go to Florida or California to be cured.

THE KING OF SIAM'S AMAZONS.

A correspondent derives the following curious facts from the Prince of Siam, brother to the king, who has been on a visit to Europe:

He gave us some curious information about the king's Amazons, the Royal Guard being composed entirely of women. This battalion consists of four hundred women, chosen among the handsomest and most robust girls in the country. They receive excellent pay and their discipline is perfect. They are admitted to serve at the age of thirteen, and are placed in the army of reserve at twenty-five. And from that period they no longer serve about the king's person, but are employed to guard the royal palaces and crown lands.

On entering the army the Amazons make a vow of chastity, from which there is no exemption, unless any of them should attract the king's attention and be admitted among his wives. The king's choice seldom falls on the most skilled in military exercise. The costume these women wear is very rich.

Their full dress is composed of a white woolen robe, embroidered with gold. The cloth is extremely fine, and descends as far as the knee. It is covered with a light coat of mail and a gilt cuirass. The arms are free, and the head is covered with a gilt casque. When wearing this dress on state occasions, their only weapon is a lance, which they handle with wonderful dexterity. With their undress they are armed with a musket.

The battalion is composed of four companies, and each company of one hundred women, commanded by a captain of their own sex. Should the captain die, the company is drilled during three days by the king, who appoints the most competent to succeed to the command.

The King of Siam never undertakes any expedition without being accompanied by his female guard, nor does he ever hunt, or even ride without an escort of the same guard. Every individual of the battalion has five negresses attached to her service, and having thus no domestic occupation, she can devote herself exclusively to the duties of her profession.

There is a parade ground near the city, where one company is stationed for two days every week to exercise themselves in the use of the lance, the pistol, and the rifle. The king attends once a month at these exercises, accompanied by his brother, who shares in some degree, the sovereign power, and distributes prizes to those most deserving.

In duels, on the death of one of the parties, the deceased receives a magnificent funeral and the high priest pronounces a panegyric, declaring that the deceased, by her valor, has merited eternal rest in the abode of the blessed. The survivor receives the congratulations of her companions; but, as a measure of discipline, she is sentenced to pass two months away from her companions in fasting and prayer.

The military organization of this battalion is so perfect that the entire army endeavors to imitate it.

Cut Flowers.—The cut flower business, which we might almost call another phase of floriculture, is perhaps greater in the United States than in any other part of the world. Certainly the use of cut flowers in Philadelphia or New York for bouquets, basket, and other designs, is far greater than in either London or Paris, and the taste shown in their arrangement here is vastly superior.

It is estimated that $3,000,000 was paid for cut flowers in New York alone, in 1887, one-third of which was for rosebuds. Immense glass structures are erected in the suburbs for the special purpose of growing cut flowers to supply the bouquet-makers of that city. Not less than twenty acres of glass surface is devoted to the purpose of forcing roses alone during the winter.

At some seasons the prices paid for these forced rosebuds are perfectly astounding. One grower of Madison, N. J., took into New York three hundred buds of the crimson rose known as "General Jacqueminot," for which he received at wholesale $300, and which, no doubt, were retailed at $1.50 and $2 each. A flower dealer in New York, a few days before Christmas, received the only four of this same variety that were offered in the city, and found a customer for them at $60, or $15 apiece, or eight times the value of their weight in gold.

A Good Little Boy.—A mother said to her eldest boy, the other night, at the supper table:

"Why, Frankie, I never knew you to ask for preserves a second time."

Frankie didn't say much, but his little brother Tommy, who was innocent of the ways of bad boys, spoke up, with a guileless smile on his pure little face, and said:

"That's because Frankie lost the key he made to open the pantry. That's why he never used to want much preserves at the supper table. He used to get all he wanted before supper, but now he can't open the pantry."

After Frankie's father had administered the proper corrective, Tommy remarked to himself, as he sat down to study his lesson:

"I expect that poor Frankie is sorry he didn't give me some of those preserves when I asked him for them. He will know better next time."

Salvation Oil is a speedy and permanent cure for all pain. It extirpates the pains.

New York city is America's metropolis; her pride is Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup at 25cts

A POWER OF THE AIR.

In these latter days, with all our scientific knowledge and mechanical appliances, it is wonderful how little we really know about some of the familiar forces that, unseen, surround us. Of all things in nature, electricity is perhaps the most mysterious.

Within us and around us, permeating all matter, this force, or fluid, or whatever name may be applied to it, is ever present—not stationary or in fixed quantity, but continually varying, as restless waves of the sea. It is only at times of unusual electrical commotion that they become perceptible to the senses, as, for instance, when the aurora is visible in the heavens, when St. Elmo's fires are glowing, or during a thunderstorm.

St. Elmo's fire is a peculiar but, at sea, not unfamiliar phenomenon; and although it chiefly occurs during thunder-storms, it is itself in no way dangerous. It always appears at the apex of lofty, tapering objects, resembling a flame of fire rising out of them. It may sometimes be seen at the tops of trees, but more frequently on the masts or yardarms of ships at sea. It is nothing more than a harmless discharge of electricity.

But atmospheric electricity assumes its most impressive aspect when it appears in the lightning flash. An earthquake excites only a feeling of terror; but while a thunderstorm has its terrors, it has also its fascinations. When "heaven's artillery" plays, we cannot but be impressed with a sense of our own littleness and helplessness, and touched with a feeling of fear.

There are three kinds of lightning—forked or zigzag lightning, sheet lightning, and globular lightning. Lightning is a discharge of electricity between two clouds, or between clouds and the earth. Fortunately for us, most of the lightning passes from cloud to cloud.

The position of greatest peril from lightning is under isolated, unprotected objects, such as trees, though a position from the tree, at a distance of the height of the tree, is considered safe. It is not desirable to sit before a fire in a room during a thunder-storm, the soot and the heated air in the chimney acting as conductors. Generally speaking, there is perhaps less danger from lightning in towns than elsewhere, the numerous protectors erected on chimney stalks and church steeples providing some measure of safety.

A lightning-conductor affords protection to a space around the diameter of which is four times its height. But great care is necessary in erecting such conductors; they must be continuous, that is to say, they must have no bad joints. It is also essential they should have proper connection with the earth; merely dipping the wires into the ground will not do. Underground water-mains make good earth connections. Where these are not available, an earth-plate of sheet-copper, three feet by three feet and an eighth of an inch thick, should be buried in wet earth, surrounded with coke. But no work of this description should be undertaken without skilled supervision.

Every one is familiar with the fact that lightning does not spring direct from cloud to cloud, or to the earth, but pursues a zigzag course. This is due to the fact that the air is not equally humid throughout.

Electricity always take the path which offers least resistance to its passage. Damp air is a better conducting medium than dry air; consequently, the lightning selects the dampest route, avoiding the drier strata and zones it encounters, and advances, now directly, now obliquely, until it reaches the opposite cloud, where it subdivides into a number of forks.

Owing to the resistance it encounters in its path, intense heat is generated, which causes the air to expand. Immediately after the flash, the air again contracts with great violence and with a loud report, which is echoed and re-echoed among the clouds.

The report reaching the ear of the listener from varying distances, is drawn out into a series, and, being still further prolonged by the echoes, the roll of the thunder is produced. It is a curious fact that, although the sound of thunder is exceedingly loud when heard near at hand, the area over which it is audible is comparatively circumscribed.

The noise of a cannonade will be heard, under favorable conditions, at a distance of nearly a hundred miles, while the sound of thunder does not travel over fifteen miles. The occurrence of the thunder and the lightning is, of course, simultaneous; but as light travels faster than sound—its passage is practically instantaneous—the flash may be seen several seconds before the thunder is heard.

The distance of thunder may thus be approximately estimated, an interval of five seconds between the flash and the thunder-clap being allowed to the mile.

Sheet-lightning has the appearance of a sheet of flame momentarily illuminating part of the sky or cloud-surface. It is, in reality, but the reflection of lightning flashing beyond the horizon or behind the clouds, and at too great a distance for the thunder to be audible.

But the most remarkable of all the manifestations of electricity is globular lightning, in appearance like a ball of fire moving leisurely along, and remaining visible, it may be, several minutes.

The more weakness, the more falsehood; strength goes straight. Every cannon ball that has in it hollows or holes goes crooked.

THE MODERN HAT.

The modern hat can be traced back to the "petasus" worn by the ancient Romans when on a journey; and hats with brims were also used, probably on like occasions, by the earlier Greeks.

It was not till the Roman conquest that the use of hats began in England. A "hatte or beiver" about the middle of the twelfth century was worn by some of the "nobles of the lande, mette at Clarendom;" Froissart describes hats and plumes which were worn at Edward's court in 1340, when the Garter order was instituted.

In the thirteenth century the use of the scarlet hat which distinguishes cardinals was sanctioned by Pope Innocent IV. The merchant in Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" had "on his head a Flaundrish bever hat;" and from that period onwards there is frequent mention of "felt hatten," "beever hattes," and other like names. Throughout mediæval times the wearing of a hat was regarded as a mark of rank and distinction.

The caprices of fashion in hats during the reign of Elizabeth may be understood from an extract from Stubb's "Anatomy of Abuses," published about 1585:—"Sometimes they use them sharpe on the crowne, pearking up like the spire or shaft of a steeple, standing a quarter of a yard above the crowne of their heads; some more, some lesse, as please the fantasies of their inconstant mindes.

"Other some be flat, and broade on the crowne, like the battlements of a house. Another sort have round; sometimes with one kind of bande, sometimes with another: now black, now white, now russed, now redde, now greene, now yellow, now this, now that; never content with one color or fashion two dais to an end."

During the reign of Charles I, the Puritans affected a steeple crown and broad brimmed hat, while the cavaliers adopted a lower crown and a broader brim ornamented with feathers.

Still greater breadth of brim and a profusion of feathers were fashionable characteristics of the hats in the time of Charles II., and the gradual expansion of brim led to the device of looping or tying up that portion.

Hence arose various fashionable "cocks" in hats, such as the "Monmouth cock," &c., and ultimately, by the looping up equally of three sides of the low-crowned hat, the cocked hat which prevailed throughout the eighteenth century was elaborated.

The New Bridal Bouquets.—London's fashionable marriages have lately been distinguished by the enormous size of the favors worn by the servants. At a wedding which was largely attended a few weeks ago by theatrical celebrities, and which was solemnized at the Chapel Royal, Savoy, the coachmen all wore nearly a foot square posies in their coats. In fact, so broad were these ornaments, that for a moment it was difficult to ascertain whether the huge bouquet was driving the horse or not, so little of the coachmen appeared to be manifest behind the flowers. Thoughtful people, after the ceremony is over, collect these posies and send them to the nearest hospital—a kindly charitable way of remembering the sick.

Female Supremacy.—In several villages in Finland a religious sect has taken root, the fundamental dogma of which is the sovereign authority of woman in the family. The disciples of this sect when they marry take a vow to submit to the wife in all things, and to confess to her once a week. On their part the women choose one of their number as their head, whose duty is to see that the men behave themselves, and to punish them if they transgress. This sect bears some resemblance to that of the "Purificants" in Siberia, who also recognize the supremacy of woman.

WANAMAKER'S.

Philadelphia, February 13, 1888.

Late word from Paris: "Silks will be worn for street wear more than for perhaps three years past."

No Paris word needed to tell that Silk prices were never lower and that they are not likely to stay so low very long.

The Silks known in the trade as "Summer Silks," that have been so fashionable, especially for country wear, are of Swiss make. But the prices have been sqeezed down until production has nearly stopped. Neat checks and stripes in many colorings, 50c a yard.

23 in. Black Gros-grain at $1 that has not been sold heretofore under $1.25. The "grain" a plump, lustrous, even, round cord, closely woven, and with that mellow firmness to the touch that stands for good wear.

Satin ground with narrow stripes of Boucle Velvet. Intended for garnitures. Strikingly handsome as a trimming. Imported to sell at $2.50. You shall have it at $1 a yard. 20 colorings, including all the late liked and likeable shades.

Muslin Underwear.—Whatever you are thinking of expect to find it here—at less than you have in mind.

Four items to judge by:

Skirts. Good muslin, well made, deep blind embroidered ruffle, or open pattern, 75 and 90c.

Chemises, 50c. each. Good value at nearly double.

Drawers. Good cambric, fine Torchon insertion, deep Torchon edging, 75c.

Muslin Night Gowns, 75c, 85c, $1, $1.25. We never had better value at the prices.

Almost any Umbrella is good enough for a shower. You want one that balances properly, folds snugly, is got up neatly, and will wear well. The cost needn't be much, either. Here are a couple of sorts from a hundred or so that fill the bill.

Double twilled silk, silk cover and tassel, $2.25. We doubt if they were ever equaled at the price.

26 and 28 in. Umbrellas, with gold and silver handles, at $3 to $4.50. About half price.

Filters.—The muddy water time is at hand. No need to drink the dirt if you don't care to.

Jewett Filters, with cooler, $5.50, $7.25, $8.75, $10.25; 50c extra if decorated.

Jewett Kitchen Filters, $4, $5, $6.25, $7.25.

Gate City Filters (porous stone), $3 to $20.

JOHN WANAMAKER,
Philadelphia.

Humorous.

A MIDNIGHT IDYL.

'Twas midnight's darkest hour, and through the streets
The dashing rain whirled on in blinding sheets.
One lonely traveler staggered on his way,
But careless of the weather timed his lay,
"I won't go home till morning."

The grim policeman stalked along his beat
And on his way the traveler chanced to meet.
"How, now!" he said, "How came you in this plight!—
And singing songs! Indeed, you're very right;
You won't go home till morning."

—U. N. Nonk.

Sound sleepers—Snorers.

Hard thing to sharpen.—The water's edge.

When an undertaker was asked if business was good with him he said he had dead loads of it.

What is that which is neither flesh nor bone, and yet has four fingers and a thumb?—A glove.

A late book is entitled "Half Hours With Insects." What a lively half hour one can have with a wasp!

Some people are always behind-hand. Some day one of these fellows will neglect to die until a week or so after his own funeral.

"Have a cigar, Fred? There is something I can recommend." "Just so; but if it's all the same to you, old boy, I prefer something you can smoke."

Never attend a reception with a deaf man if you do not want the appearance of every person in the room discussed in a loud tone of voice—by the deaf man.

"Look 'ere, Sal," yelled a Texas woman to her oldest girl, "don't bend over that well so fur! You'll fall in some day, and then we'll have to drink from the creek!"

Now that it is leap year even the most timid old maid need have no fear of burglars. Burglars are sometimes bold, but they always stop this side of rashness.

It is understood that the inventor of self-raising flour is engaged in perfecting a self-raising servant-girl, warranted to raise herself at any given hour in the morning.

Shall I pass you the butter, Mr. Chuncksesson?" inquired the new boarder. "Thanks," replied the experienced boarder, "you may hand it in this direction and let it come."

Wife, looking up from her book: "You know a great many things, John; now what do you think should be done in case of drowning?" Husband: "Have a funeral, of course!"

Featherly, to Dumley, who has given him a cigar: "Somebody—puff—must have given you this cigar, Dumley." Dumley: "Yes; is it a bad one?" "No; it's a—puff—good one."

An evil omen.—"Are you superstitious?" "Not very. Why?" "Do you believe that it is a sign of death when a dog howls under your window at night?" "Yes, if I can find my gun before the dog gets away."

The father thought he would appeal to his young manhood. One morning when he made his usual demand the father said: "Don't you think you're most too old to beg for a nickel, my son?" "That's so," said the boy, thoughtfully; "give me a dime."

He (with deep passion): "Oh, Geraldine, my darling, I love you so! I love you so! Be mine, dearest, be mine." She, with suppressed emotion: "Oh, Harold, you are so sudden; I must have time to—" He, unguardedly: "Don't mention it, darling. Time is nothing; money's the thing, and you've got plenty."

She declined for two or three nights to say her prayers. One night her papa covered his face with his hands and said: "It makes papa feel sick to think Maggie won't say her prayers." "Papa feel sick?" "Yes, dear." "Papa better take castor oil." The subject of prayer was no longer discussed that night.

"Stevie," a bright four-year-old, had been told that he must not ask for anything to eat when visiting the neighbors. Soon after, at the house of a distant relative, where he invariably found something to eat, he hung around with a wishful sort of look, until finally he broke out: "Aunt Jane, I'm awful thirsty!" "Are you?" "Yes. I'm so thirsty I could eat a doughnut!"

Great traveller: "Yes, they have some curious customs in Cuba. For instance, Cuban girls won't let their lovers kiss them until after marriage." Omaha girl: "Very short engagements, I suppose?" Traveller: "No; sometimes the engagements last several years." Omaha girl: "And during all that time they won't be kissed?" Traveller: "Not once." Omaha girl: "I don't believe it!"

A Legend of Braemar.—According to the legend, the district of Braemar, Scotland, was once peopled by giants so tall that they could stride from hill-top to hill top without descending into the glens, which must have greatly facilitated highland travel.

The chief pastime of these Brodignagians was hunting wild boars, which were of commensurate size, and possessed, in addition, a most obnoxious peculiarity, for they were covered with long, sharp, tubular spines, in the hollow of which was so deadly a poison, that if anyone had the ill-luck to prick even his finger enough to draw blood, he was sure to die.

The chase, then, was a perilous one; but was rendered more easy by a want of fixity of purpose in the porcine mind.

This was turned to advantage in the following manner: The giants took their stand on the hill-tops surrounding a boar's lair. One of them then uttered a peculiar cry, on hearing which the beast charged in the direction of the noise; but before it could reach the hunter, another repeated the same cry, whereupon it turned upon him; a third then took up the note, and so on, till the boar was thoroughly wearied, and was easily knocked on the head.

Now, after a time, discord broke out among the giants, owing to the usual cause.

One of their number had been more successful than the rest in winning the heart of an exceptionally fair giantess, and it occurred to his rivals that if they omitted to give the cry when the boar charged towards him, the damsel would have need of another suitor.

The plan was tried, but to their chagrin, when they went to ascertain its success, the boar lay dead, and the young giant stood by it unharmed. Unluckily, his cutet was among his enemies, and was equal to the occasion, for, after due compliments, he bade him measure the spoil.

The young Titan obeyed, and measured length and breadth unscathed; but on attempting, in consequence of a further order, to ascertain its girth, pierced his hand with a spine, and so perished.

A curse, however, fell upon his treacherous brethren, and they drooped and died; all but one, who took to plundering the people, and was at last outwitted and brought to his grave by a woman's craft, with attendant circumstances that in some respects remind us of the story of Ulysses and Polyphemus.

American workmen who complain of the length of their working day (an evening paper says) had better not go to Russia. It is true that in a fractional number of factories and workshops the Russians work only eight, seven, or even six hours a day; but the average length of the working day is twelve hours, while in certain establishments it is lengthened out to twenty and twenty-four hours. The twenty-four hours' people appear to do all their sleeping on Sunday. Of course these are exceptional cases; but the fact that the normal working day of Russia industry is twelve hours is quite enough to show how much better off is the American workman than his fellow-toiler abroad.

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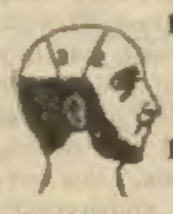

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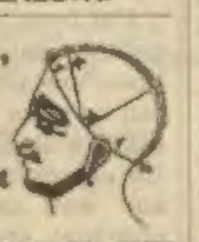

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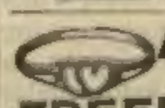

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Latest Fashion Phases.

There is not much danger that the Cabriolet chapeau, in its most accentuated form, will be largely adopted; a few ladies, sufficiently young and good looking to allow themselves these little eccentricities and exaggerations of the toilette, will wear Cabriolet chapeaux when driving, but for walking and general wear the small-fitting capote, or Directoire bonnet with a brim of moderate proportions, will be most popular.

The new capotes are still small in size; the crown is flat and sloping, rather high and generally cut up in a pointed opening at the back; the brim is either turned up in diadem shape in front, or else it is slightly raised and open; the short, close-fitting sides are rounded off gradually towards the back, or end squarely, in which case strings are imperative. A few felt bonnets have very pointed peaked brims, but this shape is more adopted for velvet and other materials laid on a stiff shape.

Very pretty capotes are made of velvet stretched on the shape, and braided on the crown and brim; others have a fluted pleating up the centre of the crown, starting from a point and gradually becoming wider, and then spreading out into a fan-pleated brim at the top, but with plain sides like an ordinary capote.

Some of the shapes of bonnets covered with material are very fanciful; a few have pointed, conical crowns, others are indented or fluted, and every variety of curve, point and peak may be found in the brims.

Both high and low-crowned hats are worn, but there is far more variety of style amongst the high-crowned models than amongst those with low crowns, which all partake more or less of the shape of sailor hats.

These hats are, however, extremely becoming, especially when the brim is rather wide in front, but narrow and turned up at the back.

A charming model in this style is in green velvet, with an ornament of long passementerie leaves outlined with gold thread round the crown, and a group of green faille ribbon bows and plume of shaded beige and green feathers in front.

Many of the most fashionable shapes in felt are also repeated in velvet and in sealskin; toques in sealskin will still be worn, but high-crowned hats in fashionable shapes are far more stylish.

The trimming in some of the new models of capotes is fastened in at the back, and rises above the crown, and then falls over the brim, or stands up above it in front.

As a model of this style of trimming, we may mention a brown felt capote bordered with a bouillonne of brown velvet, and trimmed with an Alsatian bow at the back, the flat loops falling on each side, and a red wing starting from the bow and rising towards the front.

Another instance is a Directoire chapeau, also of brown felt, ornamented with a wide band of brown moire ribbon, fastened in front by a large steel buckle, and with a plume of green and red cocks' feathers put in quite at the back. Moire ribbon is very much employed, and black and dark-green moire ribbons are combined with a number of other colors.

Fur, which is undoubtedly the richest and most appropriate ornament for winter mantles and dresses, will be more largely used than ever; bands of all kinds of fur are employed for bordering the edges of walking costumes made more or less in redingote style, and also for panels and tabs on the fronts and sleeves of long mantles.

Cloth redingotes, made with bell-shaped sleeves and full skirts open in front, are also bordered and edged with bands of fur in some cases, but separate ornaments, specially made in a style to harmonize with the vetement, are more stylish and fashionable.

A very novel trimming for mantels is a kind of fur fringe, with macarons and pendants, all made of fur.

Astrakan is an extremely fashionable trimming for costumes and jackets made of light-colored cloth, especially for such as are in soft, tender shades, or in blue or green.

Chinchilla and beaver are reserved for handsome mantles and for dresses, which have wide bands of fur round the edge and up the sides of the skirt, and fur ornaments on the corsage.

Very elegant visites and mantelets are made of fur; these are in the same styles as plush and other fashionable mantles, and have the long fronts and short backs that characterize all the new models. The sleeves vary in shape; some mantles have the comfortable sling sleeve, others have a shorter and smaller sleeve, or the long pointed sleeve that is more elegant than either.

The small mantles are made in sable, sealskin, mink, astrakan, beaver, blue and black fox, and also in less costly furs than these.

Sealskin jackets are usually tight-fitting, but they are also made with loose fronts, either single or double breasted, and tight-fitting at the back. Sealskin mantelets, with pointed ends trimmed with beaver, and pelerine sleeves open nearly to the shoulder in front, and also trimmed with beaver, are amongst the newest and most stylish fur vetements.

Fur boas, and deep fur collars with long narrow mantelet ends, or finished off with boas, are novel and convenient, as they can be worn with any mantle; and a new muff, with a carefully concealed purse that the cleverest pickpocket could not detect, and well named the "Perplex," is a novelty that every lady should endeavor to procure.

The new dress materials, both silk and woollen, are very beautiful in texture, design and coloring; the newest tints are a very dark shade of navy blue, violet ebony (a very dark prune color), ocean, an indefinite, dull, blue green, etincelle, a lighter shade of the same description, and ondine, which is also a not dissimilar shade.

As regards patterns, stripes prevail; these stripes are of great width, are composed, as a rule, of groupings and arrangements of narrow stripes, or else the stripes are so figured that the material presents none of the harsh and inharmonious effects produced by plain wide stripes.

The best and finest woollens are invariably twills or diagonals, and the design of stripes on this ground, usually in the same color or in shades of the same color, is in silk with fine cross-bar lines of velvet, in silk outlined with fancy silk cord lines, or with a mixture of velvet and silk cord; a very pretty pattern on some striped fabrics is composed of a kind of basket plait in fine silk cord, but, incontestably, the most beautiful amongst the woollen fabrics are those which have raised stripes of velvet, with cut and frise pile, forming exquisite patterns of flowers, foliage, etc., twining round the straight lines of the stripes. The most exquisite effects are produced by this combination of cut and frise velvet in two or three harmonious shades. All these materials are employed for skirts only, the corsage and draperies being made of plain material to match.

A new fabric, the Madoura, employed for dresses and mantles, is made in a plain twill, and also with designs of large palms woven in genuine cashmere colors at regular intervals; on a dark brown ground this is very handsome and effective. The Radjah, a silk and wool material in cashmere coloring and pattern on a white ground, is most effective for opera cloaks.

There is immense variety in the new silken fabrics of the richest description; in plain silks, peau de soie, faille Francaise, and moire silk are much employed, but all these are combined with figured and broche silks and satins, chiefly in stripes, which are perfect triumphs of the art of weaving. An exquisite Ophelia plain moire silk, for instance, is made up with the same material striped with satin, the wider stripes bearing garlands of broche flowers in shades of Ophelia.

Another lovely fabric is a pale gray velours de Genes; the ground is satin, the pattern of gray velvet flowers on this is exquisitely delicate and sharp in outline, although the pile is rich and deep; between these wide stripes are narrower ones in a darker shade of gray satin, figured with velvet spots and sprays in silver white silk.

Odds and Ends.

NOVELTIES IN DECORATION.

Various useful suggestions have been offered, both for grand and cottage pianos ornamentation. For the former a square of plush with ornamental border; or one of linen, with a design worked over it in wool, and a broad border of plush, corresponding with the wool, is very general, placed at the small end. A handsome table cloth, not required for any table, is often laid over, or some foreign scarf, such as a Lugano or Algerian silk one, or some oriental embroidery.

An Indian importation, which has recently become fashionable for hangings, sofa covers and piano drapery, are the Phoolkarries, red, brown, or dark blue in color, rough in texture, with irregular shaped pieces of glass or talc introduced. They can be had for moderate prices, and average 4½ feet wide. Some of these are as long as 7 feet, and form effective hangings for doors or tall mirrors.

A good sized pot, hidden by a length of plush draped round, with a fine maidenhair, or some other fern in it, is often placed at the small end of a grand piano, with fresh trails of ivy laid around; or, in winter, when ferns are not available, a round, rather low ornamental pot, with dried grass, sprays of "honesty" and pampas grass, put lightly in. Unless the piano is required to be opened for use, it is nearly always decorated, more or less.

A little taste is required for this, as it is quite possible to put too much on it, and so, by overloading, spoil the effect. Covers, cut the shape of the piano, with a festooned or embroidered valance hanging down at the sides, are sometimes seen, but not often. A piece of the pretty, patterned, colored art muslin now so popular and so cheap, is often thrown over the piano, and carelessly gathered up towards the end.

Some beautiful plush covers, recently exhibited, were ornamented with flowers worked in silk, and much raised, one being in pale fawn plush, with a large spray of briar roses; and another in deep gold color, with a design of the red tacsonia and leaves. There was no valance, but satin ribbons of the two colors, carelessly twisted, and looped up, every now and then, in festoons.

The small cottage piano, with its back turned to the room, exercises one's ingenuity as to novelty. Drapery of plush, Roman satin, art muslins, and foreign embroideries are so general that one longs to launch out into something fresh.

When visiting a room reported to be artistic or uncommon, does not the eye rove to the piano in search of an idea, and, when nothing new is forthcoming, a feeling of disappointment falls on one?

A design of artificial bulrushes (sold now at most of the large shops where decorative odds and ends are to be had) and pampas grass, stitched on to a background of old gold plush, is effective. They rise from the base, and from one side, spreading outwards, half across the piano back, apparently tied together near the corner and at the stalks with a large bow of soft silken sash ribbon of old gold or dark red, according to fancy. The plush background is stretched over a piece of thin wood or thick straw board (which is brown and coarse), and finished off with a Syrian curtain, a length of soft Surah, or some fancy scarf which corresponds, brought along the top and dropped at the opposite side to that where the large bow is. A piece of the pampas grass is carried up this unadorned side from the bow, take away the hardness of outline.

Real, growing ivy, trained in long trails, and rising up from the mould filled trough or pot at one side of the piano, can be arranged in the same style with large pins. The trough or pot is hidden by a twist of plush and the large bow. I have seen this in several country houses, and thought the effect good.

Another idea is to have a narrow mirror fixed to the piano back, reaching only half across it, with a straight piece of red (or some other color) plush covering the other half and partly hidden by a great quantity of flowering grass, either pampas or the wild kind gathered by the sides of rivers, or the two mixed together, (which looks best), spreading to the top of the piano and over the edge of the glass. A narrow curtain of plush is placed at the side where the glass is, to hide its edge, but not on the side of the piano where the grasses are. The grasses are put into a receptacle of some kind, painted, to correspond with the general coloring.

An ivory piano is the last novelty, not a real one, but a clever imitation. The piano is enamelled ivory white, not a dead white, but the tint of old ivory. I recently saw one which merits description, and may suggest ideas to some of our readers. The wood part was all painted in "old ivory" enamel, candle-sconces, and all. The back and the part in front above the keyboard, where the old-fashioned drawn silk used to be, was of a most effective Japanese paper, resembling old carved ivory. To take away from the hardness of appearance a piano cloth (a new idea) of soft cream muslin, edged with some deep old Greek lace, was thrown over the top, and tied at one end with a bow of olive-green velvet, which hung down the side, just below the top, and gathered in one end of the scarf in tassel fashion.

(Continued in next number.)

A SAN FRANCISCO artist gave a little supper at his studio, and put in his invitations R. S. C. V. The letters puzzled some people, who found when they went to supper that they meant: "Bring some cold victuals."

Confidential Correspondents.

MARY.—A person born in the United States is a citizen, and can vote without being naturalized.

E. S.—The tenant must pay for whatever he gets done unless authorized by the landlord to get it done on his account.

JOE.—We can give you no information in regard to the popular superstition about white horses and red-headed girls.

KNOBLANCH.—The popular stories about William Tell were proved to be mythical by Professor Kopp, of Lucerne, in 1872.

M. P. L.—A judgment note is a note containing an agreement to confess judgment. Anyone may draw it who knows how.

C.—Jay Gould is the richest man in America at the present time. William H. Vanderbilt at the time of his death was the richest man.

COSMOS.—At twenty-two years of age little can be done for round shoulders beyond cultivating an erect carriage and practicing gymnastics. Some of the worst cases are relics of spinal disease in childhood, and therefore manifestly incurable.

MRS. M.—The cause of the Revolutionary War was the attempt of the British Government to tax the American colonists without giving them representation in Parliament. Any common school history can give you the immediate causes of the war.

M. O. P.—Your wife was bound to accompany you, and will not get the divorce if the facts shall properly appear. You will be compelled to pay the costs of her suit and alimony during the suit, and if the divorce shall be allowed you may be compelled to pay alimony afterward.

VERITAS.—You speak of California as though it were a watering-place. Taken all round, the climate is one of the best; but for consumptive people Colorado—the plains, we mean—is much better. In many Californian districts there is perpetual spring, but you change your climate with *every* change of level.

DOUBTFUL.—You are in a very perilous position, and your fate will be a hard one unless you at once clear yourself from your entanglement. Men of the sort described are found in every town, and they spread ruin. Refuse to see him again, or you are lost. If you knew as much as we do about such affairs, you would shun the man as though he were a leper. It is best to tell you the plain truth to save you.

EXTRA.—Friedrich Froebel founded the first Kindergarten at Blankenburg, Thuringia, in 1837. It became the model for similar institutions in many parts of Germany and other countries. The name means "child's garden" or "child's school." Froebel's system was at first regarded as dangerous, from the great freedom allowed children, and in 1851 a Kindergarten established by his nephew was closed by the Prussian Government.

SPIB.—You must really refuse to spend any more time in thinking about a man who is apparently selfish and indifferent. He is cautious and cool, and you must be the same. Keep him at a distance. Do you not see the gross impudence of his action? He compromises you, he monopolises you, he keeps himself free. You are not engaged, and your sister acts very wrongly in allowing you to occupy such an equivocal position.

D. HERMES.—1. A "gentleman of position and education" does not usually proclaim his status in set terms; he lets people find it out for themselves. 2. You want us to believe that you can foretell a man's future if we tell you within ten minutes the time of his birth. In that case it follows that batches of about six thousand people in the world all live the same lives and have the same fortunes. In our experience we never knew two alike. If a vast orb like Saturn can influence the fate of a puny creature born on this tiny planet, then we can only say that the force is exerted in a way which defies all law. We have no doubt you believe you can do this. What others may believe is another matter.

VERBENA.—Your writing is certainly very bad, and we must advise you to take to copy-books again; but your letter is all that could be desired. If you were not an unworldly girl, you would know that popular young preachers always have swarms of young ladies languishing after them. The young men grow used to homage, and we are afraid that they are often most consummate flirts; but you are evidently not one of the ordinary tribe who foster them. Had you half an eye, you would see that the man has picked you out in spite of your coldness and reserve. He has asked you to help him in his work. Do you think he would make the same proposal to any of the lackadaisical persons who chatter small-talk to him? He sees the earnest side of your nature, and, being a highly-cultured man of the world, he knows your value. By all means aid him. He could not have paid you a more subtle compliment than he has done. Meet him in a business-like manner; make no advances, but do not foolishly disguise your liking entirely; wait, and, if he asks you—as he doubtless will—to marry him, accept him frankly.

MORE.—You are evidently in a state from which you must emerge purer and better. A young fellow who has a passionate desire to live nobly always attains his wish in the end, even though his aspirations are merely turbulent and indefinite at first. All good lads pass at one time or other through your stage, and the experience is fruitful. But remember that all life depends on conduct, and not on learning or cleverness. You speak of your comrade who improved himself so wonderfully by dint of severe study. Why not imitate him? If you set yourself to work for a definite examination, the hard grind will prevent you from frittering away your powers on your present laudable but cloudy yearnings. Take a little pleasant reading merely to keep your mind sweet, but devote most of your time to reading hard. Keep away from the worthless young fellows who first of all waste their time in bars and billiard-rooms. Give as much as an hour a day to athletics, and you will soon feel that you are growing more sure of yourself. It is useless to wish—you must act. We cannot recommend any course of study which will produce all the wonderful results which you desire; but we can tell you that, if you undergo the steady, inexorable ordeal of preparation for an examination, you will acquire habits of work and thought which will be of far more use to you than are all your poetic imaginings. All men are sentimental at your age if there is any good in them; but the sooner the fit is over the better.